BULLETIN OF THE INSTITUTE OF TRADITIONAL CULTURES MADRAS

Issue Commemorating :

1. Sixth Birth Centenary of St., Arunagirinathar
2. Second Birth Centenary of Saint-Composer Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar
3. International Music Year, and
4. International Women's Year.

1975
JULY TO DECEMBER

UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS
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Institute of Traditional Cultures

Madras

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PREFACE

This number of the Bulletin is commemorative of:

(1) the Fifth centenary of the Birth of Poet-Saint Aruṇagiri-nāthar of Tamiḻ Nāḍu.

(2) the Bi-centenary of the Birth of the famous music composer, Thiru Muthuswāmy Dikshitar.

(3) the International Music Year,

and (4) the International Women's Year.

As previously, this Bulletin closely follows the principle mentioned in the previous issue, viz. to devote greater attention to Tamiḻ Traditions and Tamiḻ Culture and, at the same time, emphasise the bonds of the traditional cultures of the other regions of South and South East Asia.

In view of the large number of articles from scholars and the length of the proceedings of the Seminars, some sections like 'Institutions, Scholars and Artists' had to be omitted. As in the previous issue, the authors were left free to use such diacritical marks as was adopted earlier in the Bulletin, in view of the separate systems of transliteration in languages like, Tamil and Sanskrit.

The Institute is grateful to all scholars who have contributed a variety of articles on Culture and Traditions which appear in this issue. It had to hold over some valuable articles for consideration of space, for publication in the next issue.

The Government of Tamiḻ Nāḍu and the Government of India have kindly continued the financing of the Institute and its activities. The University of Madras continues to accommodate the Institute in its building, providing it with the concomitant amenities and, the full and hearty co-operation, of all its Departments in the activities of the Institute. It also bears the cost of paper and printing of issues of the Bulletin. The Institute is

grateful for all this valuable help, which has enabled it to continue to function and carry on its activities.

The Institute is glad that Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah who was responsible for the starting of this Institute, and is now the Vice-Chancellor and the ex-officio President of this Institute, has kindly contributed an article on the need of mutual understanding and appreciation of cultures of the Nations of the World and the role of this Institute in this regard.

The Executive Committee has also given valuable assistance in running this Institute. Due to the increased costs of printing and paper, a cut in the distribution has become unavoidable.

MADRAS,
30—4—1976.

Dr. K. K. PILLAY,
Director.

CONTENTS

		Pages
Preface	...	iv
ARTICLES		
The Art of the Impossible—Unesco's Fight for Cultural Understanding —*Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah*	...	1
Ayyappan —*Dr. K. Kunjunni Raja*	...	27
Consequences of Unapproachability in Travancore —*Dr. T. K. Ravindran*	...	39
Folk Art Forms of Tamiḻ Nāḍu —*Thiru S. D. Sundaram*	...	69
Ganapati-Vināyaka in Mahābhārata —*Thiru B. R. Sharma*	...	81
Impact of Buddhism and Jainism on Hinduism —*Thiru Y. Krishnan*	...	89
Folk Songs of Tamiḻ Nāḍu —*Thiru M. Arunachalam*	...	99
Aruṇagirināthar —*Thiru A. V. Jeyachandrun*	...	127
The Philosophy of Aruṇagirināthar —*Dr. V. A. Devasenapathi*	...	139
St. Aruṇagirināthar—His Life and Works —*Thiru M. Shanmukham Pillai*	...	147
St. Aruṇagirināthar's Contribution to the Music of South India —*Selvi S. A. Durga*	...	165

A Homage to Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar "The Nāda Yogin" ... 169

—Selvi S. A. Durga

MUSIC FESTIVAL REPORTS: ... 185

REPORTS OF SEMINARS:

Role of Women in preserving Culture—A Symposium. 190

Palm Leaf Manuscripts ... 259

BOOK REVIEWS: ... 281

ARTICLES

THE ART OF THE IMPOSSIBLE, UNESCO'S FIGHT FOR CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

BY

DR. MALCOLM S. ADISESHIAH,

(*President, Institute of Traditional Cultures and Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras*).

The impossible Unesco recognised:

My description of what Unesco is and what it does—cultural co-operation, development of literacy and education, implantation of science and the fight for peace—was being translated into Quechua, the language of the people of a lonely Peruvian village high in the Andes called Ichuna, which I was visiting some 23 years ago. As I watched my audience, I began to grow a little nervous because instead of the usual nods of approval, the normal visual expressions of satisfaction and the expected murmurs ranging from solid sympathy to enthusiastic support, I was faced by a group of stone-faced men and women. (I was to learn later that good manners in that society demanded this mass silence.) Only the village elder kept growling "No", "Not really", and shaking his head in apparent negation and disbelief, as Unesco was being presented to the village meeting. The meeting ended with the elder standing up and addressing the village conclusion to me in these words: "Mr. Unesco, you are impossible." The elder may have confused me with Unesco, but his insight into the impossible that is Unesco, is valid and profound.

Unesco is the science of the human spirit—the dogma of humanism.

Unesco is the art of the impossible—acting not only to achieve impossible ends, but also—and more seriously—through impossible means.

I am going to tread today on one facet of this very vast and very dangerous terrain: international misunderstanding.

I should not hide from you that I do not speak in the spirit of philosophical or scientific inquiry. I am a Unescan and a University man, and therefore a partisan, a partisan of the human spirit as a Unescan, a relentless seeker of truth as a University man.

The Unesco mandate established:

It is true that the Organization of which I speak is like a league of scholars, linking, through its basic aims and purposes, and in concrete endeavours on their behalf in about 140 Member States, educators, scientists, cultural workers and communication professionals of as many nationalities. It is also an Organization of which governments are the sole members, a great bureaucracy with its own civil service, inter-governmental organs, budgets resolutions and reports; an adviser to statesmen and governments, an instrument and a framework for international co-operation. But most of all, it is a set of principles, a symbol, a declaration, a resolve.

Unesco, like the United Nations itself, was created at a threshold of human history, a moment in time which the Organization was designed to perpetuate, even as circumstances and conjectures changed, to sustain through concrete action towards a common goal, in fair weather and foul.

The preamble to Unesco's Constitution expresses that moment better than I can. Many of its phrases, twenty nine years, after it was adopted, seem still to deepen with the years, to inspire renewed resolve, meditation, hope and despair; they plunge so directly into the heart of the matter.

> "...since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed";
>
> "...ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that

> suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war";
>
> "...the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and, by the propagation in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races."

The pre-Unesco world order:

In those days—seemingly distant, but only a little over four decades ago—nations and peoples were thought to be divided between those endowed with intelligence and those born mediocre, those with the right to wealth, leisure and education and those born to work for a pittance, in poverty and illiteracy. Those were the days when it was held as a given and incontrovertible truth that some nations and peoples were called by divine right to be rulers and carry the burdens of the ruling class, and that others were destined by Providence to be ruled and to enjoy the benefits of a subject people; that there were superior and inferior races, civilized and barbarian peoples; and all this was based on doctrine that there was a hierarchy of cultures in the very nature of things, that there were higher and lower cultures. Education was a luxury reserved for those born with the riches to afford it, a privilege limited to those with the necessary aptitude and intelligence, a facility reserved for the superior race, with its superior culture, to which some selected members of the inferior race, with its inferior culture, might graciously be admitted, once assimilated to the others through some curious process of osmosis.

Was it the economic and social conditions prevalent at that time which explained, if they did not justify, this dominant doctrine and accepted attitude? Or was it the doctrine and attitude that justified the conditions? In any case, one fitted into the

other and each was authoritatively expounded as part of the order of the Universe in which we lived.

Until forty years ago, much of the world was a terrifying spectacle of ignorance, poverty and disease, of vicious circles leading to the degradation of the individual human spirit and of human society, implacable as the punishments of legendary emperors, immutable as the visions which have come down to us from the ancient poets. In our country, when I was born, more than 90 per cent of the population was illiterate; only slightly more than 10 percent of the children were in primary schools; the economy was frozen in the act of collapse. Average life expectans was 19; average annual income around 40 Rupees. Handicrafts and small industries were fast disappearing; that mass of unemployed and under-employed landless agricultural labourers was reaching staggering proportions. And quinquennial famines stalked the land.

The great parliamentary speeches which mark British history were taught to us, the school boys of my generation as examples of moral and rhetorical excellence. (We recited them with what we thought was great eloquence; they must have emerged as an awful sing-song). And what did it mean to us, knowing the misery of our land and its people; when we came upon passages like the following from Macaulay's defence of Warren Hastings, that first Governor-General facing parliamentary impeachment:

"The physical organization of the Bengalee is feeble even lo effeminacy," we chanted faithfully. "He lives in a constant vapour bath. His pursuits are sedentary, his limbs delicate, his movements languid. His mind bears a singular analogy to his body and is weak even to helplessness. What the horns are to the buffalo, what the paw is to the tiger, what the sting is to the bee, what beauty, according to the old Greek song, is to woman, deceit is to the Bengalee." On we went to the height of our peroration; "Large promises, smooth excuses, elaborate tissues of circumstantial falsehood, chicanery, perjury, forgery, are the weapons, offensive and defensive, of the people of the Lower Ganges."

Laughable as Macaulay's views are today, I recall the shock that went through my system when I came upon this passage as a boy, as one of those to be committed to memory. Almost fifty years later, I could remember it word by word. And it was not Macaulay alone, but passage after passage of the most sober, liberal and judicious thinkers of that time. A liberal thinker had written "Indians are generally dissembling, treacherous, mendacious, cowardly, unfeeling and disgustingly unclean." A distinguished historian had concluded: "Hindus are strong in intellect and confessedly weak in morals. We as a race are far superior to them in force of character. We are there in India because as a nation, we speak the truth and never take bribes."

The Unesco Idea—fighting the effects of the pre-Unesco order:

This then was the doctrine and its world order that had been established and was dominant in all five continents, with some islands of relative purity and small but imperishable movements of protest, when Unesco was created, according to the preamble of its charter, to assure "the wide diffusion of culture" by promoting "the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men", and by eradicating the propagation, "through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races." In this connection, in contrast to Macaulay *et al*, I must point to the inspiration and imprint of Clement Attlee, Stafford Cripps and Ellen Wilkinson on the Unesco Charter and their role in initiating the process of decolonization, with the acceptance of India's right to Independence—both coincidentally in 1946—which certainly gave reality to the Unesco idea.

This then was the background which makes it so easy to understand the enthusiasm and goodwill, the desire for mutual understanding and appreciation with which Unesco's General Conference, bringing together all the Member States from the same five continents in Delhi in 1956, launched itself to consolidate a new world order through the major, ten-year concerted effort which came to be called, in our shorthand, the East-West Major Project, of which the Institute of Traditional Cultures, University of Madras, was a small expression. The full title of this signifi-

cant programme was the Major Project for the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western cultural values. And how could such an effort fail, if all Member States so wished and willed it? It was the very heart of the Organization, the *raison d'etre* of its existence.

I have spoken of Unesco as a symbol, a monument. So too was this decision by the sovereign body of our Organization. It was itself a great symbol of the countless struggles for equality and independence and brotherhood. It was itself a monument to the silent and intractable lost causes which had persistently refused to lose, and which had stubbornly gathered impetus over decades and at the cost of untold sacrifices. It was itself a kind of victory of the idea of Man.

But Unesco must be more than a symbol, even if merely to remain one. The ten years decided by the General Conference for launching its first action on this doctrine of Man have passed. For me, there was no programme, no effort undertaken in those ten years that was more central to the destiny of the Organisation than this Project, no more awful contest and struggle that would decide the future of Man, than this concrete attempt to achieve cultural understanding.

What was done?

What was accomplished in this period?

The dominant characteristic of the programme was that it was carried out by 59 Member States of Europe and the Americas and 28 Member States of Asia, with 34 African Member States joining in its last five years. I know that this is the real Unesco, a framework of inter-state co-operation. This, then, was the first and most basic achievement of the Project—that it was carried out by Member States, with the Unesco Secretariat acting as an instrument of liaison and a focus of multilateral action.

I am afraid, however, that we do not have a detailed, comparative and statistical account of the individual activities carried out by the Member States within the framework of the Project,

without reference to the Secretariat. What I can give you is the record of what these Member States did in liaison with the Secretariat, that is the pulse and tempo of the programme as seen from its central point. I should add, though, that even if I were to give you an account of everything the States themselves did, it would only add quantity and diversity without changing my basic thesis regarding the Project's objectives and methods.

In any case, what is the record? It is an impressive one and the General Conference has recognized it as such.

The first task was to carry out the function of promotion of and liaison between Member States' activities. This was discharged by the Bulletin of the Major Project, called *Orient-Occident*, which had an average readership of ten thousand for each issue. Fifty-two issues in three languages were published in the ten years.

And what were the concrete activities?

One hundred Asian literary works, from India, China, Japan, Iran and the Arab States, were translated into English and French during the ten-year period. The average readership for these works which falls between the higher readership of novels and pocketbook editions and the lower readership of specialised reference books mainly available in libraries, was about 4,000. The total readership over the ten-year period can therefore be estimated at as much as 400,000, if not more.

Some 20 international cultural meetings, colloquia and other conferences were held in which more than 30,000 participants and observers took part as well as a number of large audiences. Moreover, most of the participants were professors, authors and artists who often communicated their experience of the colloquia to large numbers through their teachings or writings. The Institute of Traditional Cultures published a biennial Bulletin during the 10 year period and ran cultural conferences and seminars in which over 12,000 persons participated.

As a result of the project, some 40 geography text-books in 15 countries were revised or are being revised with a view to removing some of the sources of friction between countries. These text-books were circulated to experts from different countries who sent their comments to their publishers. Although text-books revision moves slowly, it can be estimated that, in the long run, this process will reach more people than they any other aspect of the programme, and at an age when they are most open to new ideas and impressions.

Further, teaching of international understanding and extra-curricular activities presenting other cultures were intensified in more than 475 associated schools and teacher-training institutions, and perhaps some 500,000 teachers and students were involved during this ten-year period. In addition, 20 posters and photographs were prepared, illustrating daily life in different countries, for distribution in schools. As a rough estimate, it can be said that some one and a half million children have seen these charts.

More than 25,000 leaders of youth organizations were directly engaged in cultural exchanges and study, and more than 5,000 adult education leaders. Through other out-of-school activities perhaps another 200,000 persons have been involved, through the Project, in the understanding of other cultures.

Two hundred recorded programmes on Oriental, classic and folk music, Asian poetry and cultures were broadcast over 200 broadcasting stations in 125 countries. The number of persons who actually heard any particular broadcast is difficult to estimate. In the light of the average number of listeners to different kinds of programmes and the reactions to some of the most successful broadcasts within the East-West Major Project, however, it can be estimated that some of them reached 20,000,000 listeners.

Two hundred and fifty articles on Asian cultures have been distributed in 150 countries and have reached several hundred thousand persons, with some articles reaching well over a million people.

Lastly, some 120 fellowships for high-level scholars to study eastern cultures were awarded, and two associated institues in India and Japan were established involving the work of some 100 specialists who were responsible for 15 publications on Asian cross-cultural research.

To sum up, it can be estimated that more than 700,000 persons were actively involved or personally interested in operations conducted within the framework of the East-West Major Project. As for the general audience reached by communication media, it is clear that several million, and in some cases, 20,000,000 people, were touched.

All of these programmes were devoted not only to spreading awareness of traditional Asian values, like tolerance, politeness, non-violence, simplicity, adherence to truth, intellectual open-ness and curiosity, but also, and most of all, to stressing that there is no geographic or cultural or regional monopoly of good and evil, to bringing home to as many human beings as possible that the so-called East-West dialectic, involving the confrontation of two great cultural entities, is based on false and non-existing stereotypes. No culture has built-in virtues and vices; there are wise and foolish Chinese and ugly and beautiful Indians, just as there are fun-loving and serious-minded Sri Lankans.

This is what was, but what was accomplished?

At the conclusion of the Project, Unesco's General Conference met to consider this question. After an intensive discussion based on an evaluation carried out by the distinguished international Advisory Committee, which guided its progress over ten years, the Conference noted that: "The Major Project led to a deeper mutual understanding of cultures and a more informed selection of methods of combating ignorance and prejudice." It further recognised that the programme had contributed to "the development and spread of significant information on various cultures (and) the building of cross-cultural understanding and appreciation into school programme and the development of techniques to achieve this."

The pre-Unesco order still lives and returns :

In ten years, Unesco helped people to acquire "a deeper mutual understanding of (Asian) cultures" and used effective "methods of combating ignorance and prejudice" about Asia — says the General Conference. Has Unesco really begun this double task — to promote understanding and combat misunderstanding? Whom has it helped and influenced? What are these effective methods it has used?

I think it is only right that we ask ourselves these searching and somewhat sceptical questions. Because ignorance, prejudice and misunderstanding not only still exist as a live force; they also have formidable means and methods at their disposal.

I shall illustrate this thesis by the method of sampling — using the evidence that comes to hand of the impact on the world at large of this ten-year programme and other cultural studies programmed by Unesco — to show that examples and exponents of the most flagrant kinds of misunderstanding, far from disappearing or at least beginning to retreat, continue to thrive in only slightly more subtle ways.

Less than a year after the Major Project ended, in August 1967, a well-known English language magazine[1] with over 5,000,000 subscribers and more than 25,000,000 readers in 130 countries and territories, featured a lead essay on the theme "Corruption in Asia". It is a serious, semi-academic, semi-journalistic piece, buttressed by an air of scholarship, wide reading much delving into sources, some going back to the ancient Sanskrit code of Brahaspati and Confucius and Seng Tsian. Its content can be briefly summarised.[2]

1. I want to emphasize that this is a sample, not of this journal but of our information sources and the services behind them. Actually, this same periodical, only one month later, featured an essay on "Race and ability" which could have been a popularised version of Unesco's September 1967 statement on race.

2. In the interests of good taste, I have left certain blanks where the names of Member States, cities or persons occur.

First, a dogma is smoothly set forth. "Chiselling is a part of the Asian ambiance, from the ramshackle capital of lazy little ... to the broad boulevards of booming ... and the expense account night clubs of prosperous ... Even rigid communist disciplinarians have failed to suppress the fast-buck artists: from Red China come tales of profiteering in the communes; refugees report that shady officials do a brisk business in exit permits."

Next, some geographical concessions are allowed. "The evil of corruption, to be sure, is not peculiarly Oriental. Asians rightly resent any holier-than-thou attitude on the part of foreigners. Yet despite Western shortcomings at home, there is a difference. In the West, corruption takes ingenuity. In Asia (and to a lesser extent in Africa and the Middle East) corruption is habitual and even traditional."

Then religion is called in. "In fact, corruption is really only a Western word. The stern ethical injunctions against wrong doing embedded in the Judaeo-Christian tradition are nowhere to be found in the other-wordly concepts of Asian religions. Buddhist doctrine lacks the concept of a wrathful God who punishes evil......"

Finally, sociology is added: "To the Asians, what has counted most was not duty to nation but duty to family and friend ... Family loyalty is the binding force in Asian society ... The ideal is to find a successful personage who will lend influential aid to the child — and who will later expect reciprocal support ... The major of a ... township denounced the investigation (into corruption charges against him) as an invasion of his family privacy ... Rampant though nepotism is, it represents only a part of the corruption that permeates ... from top to bottom."

And the conclusion is drawn: "It is the system and it isn't going to be changed no matter who is elected ... It is likely that the odour of Asian corruption will linger for some time to come ... Asians are acquiring a taste for the material advantages of Western life and developing a respect for the benefits of free

enterprise. And along with this taste and this respect, they are beginning to realise that the old ways, which they call traditional, but the West calls corrupt, are simply not good business."

The Unesco anti-Unesco confrontation:

A number of questions are raised by the confrontation of Unesco's ten-year programme and its mass of documents, radio and film material with this pithy, clear and lucid essay which sums up for its' readers, in two pages, the supposedly special characteristics of more than half the world's population. I do not mean the simplest and most obvious question of which view of Asian culture is correct, for that is a matter of faith and prejudice and indeed of our most fundamental concepts of the nature of the human race. Surely every nation or culture of this earth will recognize that some of its people have vices, corruption among them. And just as surely, no one will find that such vices are inherent, built-in, and an ineradicable part of a system of values, except in some other nation or culture. A mere confrontation of the various points of view is sufficient to demonstrate their absurdity.

What I have in mind are some hard and complex questions about Unesco's very methods of work, which the magazine article makes one ponder.

What is the relative effect on our reading and literate world of the Unesco programme's efforts and conclusion as compared to those of the essay? I suspect that the 25,000 readers of the essay now hold views on corruption as an Asian cultural value, which are clearer and more definitive than any appreciation of those values that Unesco's programme has been able to promote among the more than 20,000,000 people it touched in some way. I realize that this question cannot be definitely answered one way or another. But Unesco is aware of the possibility. Its Advisory Committee has said: "One commercial film could offset painstaking efforts to promote the appreciation of values." Has the magazine essay completely wiped out all the efforts and results of Unesco's ten-year programme? And this magazine essay

is only a sample of this other, non-Unesco, world order and its values.

A second question is one relating to the methods followed by Unesco in its programme. They are methods that work through governments and official bodies, methods dispersed and scattered over a multitude of miniscule activities, with the usual buckshot scatteration consequences that follow. Should Unesco, in regard to its fundamental trust and mandate to promote cultural understanding, pull in and concentrate its fight on key segments of thought and life? Should it, in this area, stop being objective and neutral, scientific and scholarly in the abstruse and abstract sense of the terms, in the sense that assumes that misunderstanding and prejudice either do not exist or will simply go away by preaching and teaching understanding?

Should Unesco come out in the open and use the methods of the partisan and the committed in-fighting openly, clearly and rationally against ignorance and prejudice? Should it not only expend its limited resources in long-term research aimed at arriving at a scholarly consensus on the nature of European or Asian or African culture — but also (although perhaps more indirectly) write this kind of essay against false cultural images and the old order of things? Should it produce films, radio and television programmes, exposing the continuance and insidious spread of ignorance and misunderstanding of cultures?

What of the people influenced, the grist to the anti-Unesco mill? The General Conference, in reviewing the results of the programme, recognized that:

"Despite its attempt to reach the world public as a whole the Major Project had been the most effective in informing rather small and specialized audiences in many Member States. This result was implicit in the methodology of the Project, which, with the exception of displays and exhibitions and a rather limited public information programme, was addressed almost exclusively to scholars and other experts. It was suggested that this approach is inevitable and not necessarily to be criticized, since the general

public in any country can realistically be reached only through its own intellectual leaders."

The "intellectual leaders", the scholars and other experts, have indeed been the audience of the Unesco programme. But to hope that, through them, the general public will be informed and influenced seems to me a little like whistling in the dark to keep up one's courage. We know for a fact that the sample essay from which I have quoted has been read and digested within a week by 25,000,000 people. Unesco has taken ten years to reach, in one way or another a number less than this. And this quantitative gap is not all. For the Unesco audience of intellectual leaders and scholars is already on our side. Addressing them is like preaching to the converted; it is like carrying paddy to Thanjavur. The sample essay, on the other hand, actually converted some millions (five, ten, twenty?) who have no other knowledge or views on the subject, to a certain view of Asian culture.

I will offer a second sample—which is related to another of our cultural studies programmes. In six days of August and September, a French language daily, had as its closing section a full page description in each issue of the life and culture of the Central American Republics (Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica) and Panama. Many of the series' statements are curiously similar to the article on Asia I have quoted previously, although written in a different language and dealing with an area some 20,000 kilometres distant. In one of the articles, the six countries are described as "banana republics"; in another, the bribing of customs officers is graphically described as part of national culture; in a third, the power of the military is depicted as normal and eagerly welcomed by the people; in a further article, the country and its people are described as habitually dirty and prone to grovelling.

How do the authors account for this bleak and monolithic picture of six small and quite different countries? As their audience and tone is less "intellectual" and "scholarly" they have no need to bring in sociology or philosophy, biology or economics, political science or theology:

"Comment expliquer...? Comme on explique la politique en Moyen—Orient: parce que c'est le Moyen—Orient, L'Amerique centrale, non plus, ne s'explique pas autrement."

The outrage and despair which my Central American and Panamanian friends felt in reading this distorted account which purports to be an exhaustive study of their culture can be imagined. Written in the first person by two writers who claim to have travelled widely for three weeks in the six countries, it has been made to sound convincing and credible. I know that the French-speaking elite who travel to Central America and have studied its culture will remain uninfluenced. I know just as well, however, that the effect on the pre-ponderant masses of the French reading public who have no other source of information and therefore no basis for comparison, will be quite another matter. Unesco is now running a programme for the study and dissemination of Latin America cultures. Should not the methods it uses and the resources it allocates to it meet this real situation?

I can only briefly mention a third sample — which relates most of all to what Unesco's Constitution calls the need to preserve "the independence, integrity and the fruitful diversity of cultures", and the problem we face in adhering to this mandate. Here I will merely touch upon the subject, because the material I have is somewhat too local and topical to me as a Tamilian. This time I refer to a series of articles and publications from some of our Tamil journals — which heavily emphasizes the glories of the more than 5,000 years-old culture which is ours, stresses the dependence on that culture of our Tamil neighbours —in Ceylon, Malaysia, Singapore, Burma and even in far-away Fiji, and ends with a suggested programme for the cultural "streamlining" of these neighbouring cultures.

This is simply to say that the problem of cultural understanding is especially acute when it is a question not so much of small countries studying larger ones and emulating their achievements, but of large countries appreciating the unique cultural

values which their small friends treasure and preserve. Some of the major obstacles that small countries face in establishing a viable basis for the doctrine of equality of cultures needs to be high-lighted. Whether it be the concept of a model prototype society, the appeal to an emotional fatherland or the theory of an original state from which a new and ideal civilization grows and flows, such problems are often similar despite the differences in geography and the varieties of cultures and ideologies involved. Their effect is to attempt to submerge, streamline and swallow the cultures of smaller countries. In sum, I refer to the menace of monolithic culturalism or monotonous acculturation. Here is an unending and unfinished task for the Institute of Traditional Cultures.

Before I end my sampling, I want to refer to one other example, which is fortunately not really a sample, but rather somewhat of a discordant voice in the wilderness today. It relates to Unesco's programme in the field of race and racial prejudice, but suggests some lessons which might be drawn with regard to our fight against cultural misunderstanding.

In a journal devoted to popularising science, I recently came across an article which uses apparently "scientific" findings, first to set up a hierarchy of races, and then to identify higher and lower cultures with that hierarchy. In this remarkable expose about the cultural characteristics of the negro and the reasons for his racial separateness, scholarly references are first made to the findings of *animal* geneticists concerning hereditary genetic endowments. The conclusions of *human* biologists, that there is not only an interplay of genetic differentiation and rapprochment in the human species, but also an equality of cultural capacity which results in its basic unity, are then purportedly refuted by the *animal* geneticists' findings, which they themselves consider irrelevent to this type of analysis of the human species, but which the journal says have been proved relevant by the cracking of the genetic code. (Quite the contrary would appear to be the case. The evidence to date continues to indicate the universality of all kinds of living organisms and indeed to reinforce the

precept of the equal biological potential of the species.) The third step is to hold up the animal geneticists' findings as "scientific" support for the belief that Indians or Africans or Latin Americans are inherently dirty, lazy and corrupt (a fact which is supposed to become painfully evident when they cohabit with white communities), not because of their culture or religion, but because of their very nature. The fourth and final stage is to call in evolutionary trends and physical anthropology to show that the different races of men crossed the boundary from ape to *homo-sapiens* at different points in time — the negro, it appears to the authors, having crossed the last. And so the limited genetic endowments of the negro-nature has apparently given all negroes loose joints — account for his cultural achievements in dance forms ranging from the jitterbug to the high life, the watusi and frug, as well as his pre-eminence in sprinting. It also turns out, according to the journal, that the white man crossed the boundary many moons earlier. His genetic endowments therefore includes a brain capacity and structure which account for his aptitude for science, his excellence in technology and so on.

In the field of race and racial prejudice, as in one other area, Unesco set itself from the start, to fight the evil, not simply teach the good. Unesco's 1951 Statement on Racism and its publications on race and racial misconceptions became the short-hand guide for hundreds of young university students who began specializing in race relations; they were used as textbooks in nearly every university; and they account, at least in part, for the swing of the younger generation of scientists, sociologists and anthropologists toward the "equality premise" set forth by Unesco, and for the emotional climate around the race issue today. It was these unequivocal statements which led to the withdrawal of South Africa from Unesco Membership in 1955. They also resulted in the adoption in 1962 of the Unesco Convention against Discrimination in Education and this year, in the publication of a book on the disastrous educational, scientific and cultural consequences of apartheid.

The 1967 Unesco Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, adopted less than two months ago in Paris, has now complemented and climaxed the 1951 and 1964 Statements. It declares in no uncertain terms:

> "Current biological knowledge does not permit us to impute cultural achievements to differences in genetic potential. Differences in the achievements of different people should be attributed solely to their cultural history. The people of the world today appear to possess equal biological potentialities for attaining any level of civilization. Racism grossly falsifies knowledge of human biology."

and

> "Groups commonly evaluate their characteristics in comparison with others. Racism falsely claims that there is a scientific basis for arranging groups hierarchically in terms of psychological and cultural characteristics that are immutable and innate. In this way, it seeks to make existing differences appear inviolable as a means of permanently maintaining current relations between groups."

Another facet of the same Unesco mandate violated:

But you may feel perhaps, that I exaggerate the importance of cultural understanding and appreciation in the present world situation, torn by conflicts and outbursts of violence, menaced by inequalities. You may say, perhaps, that priorities must be set, that first of all we must deal with the burning world issues of our time and devote all our efforts and resources to them before we tackle an age-old problem that no civilization has yet dealt with satisfactorily. You may say there will be time, when peace is guaranteed by political arrangements, when poverty is conquered by economic co-operation, to come down to the complex, painstaking task of understanding one another. Yet is there not a curious interaction between the concepts held of other cultures and these very issues, and indeed all international relations? Does not our idea of man effect almost all our efforts to respond to the two most burning issues of our time, development and peace?

Let us consider, first, the problem of development. I need hardly recall that, ever since its establishment in 1946, Unesco has been vitally engaged in aiding and promoting the development of all its Member States, in accordance with its constitutional purposes and in particular that of giving "fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture by collaborating with its Members at their request, in the development of educational activities", under which, whatever Unesco has done and does to promote development in its 130 Member States is always at their request and with their agreement.

What have been the results of Unesco's efforts?

At the Conference of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund held in November 1967, it was pointed out that instead of the permissible maximum of ten per cent of the value of a country's annual exports being used for servicing its foreign indebtedness, this proportion has reached the dangerous level of 20 to 30 per cent. For India, it is 22 per cent, for Brazil, 29 per cent. It was further noted that trends over the last quinquennium indicate that this proportion, far from levelling off, may well tend toward even more absurd and tragic heights, at which developing countries will have to contract additional loans to service their previous debts. For, as the World Bank reported, debt servicing of the third world has increased at an annual rate of ten per cent, while its export trade had not reached a five per cent increase per annum. The major reason for this growing burden of debt servicing is the average terms of the loans which are made.

And this is not the only problem. World Bank President McNamara has just reported that the four major aid-giving countries have not increased their economic aid programmes in the last five years, despite continuing increases in their own gross national product as against stagnation, often even deterioration of the situation in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Moreover, the *total* flow of financial resources from developed to developing countries, which might broadly be considered development aid,

has actually fallen as a proportion of the former's gross national product.

The causes for this violation of the United Nations/Unesco mandate are many, but each of them is known. Many of the causes lie outside the competence of Unesco but not one of them outside the province of the United Nations family of agencies. Although complex, they are controllable; the only thing required is the will to control them. We have willed today to spend such increasingly large amounts on armaments that the ratio of aid to armaments now stands at 1 : 15. Can we not will to work toward reversing this ratio?

Rationalization of the violation:

I do not know. Perhaps the main thing that is lacking is the conviction that the thesis I have been outlining is a valid one. For, other rationales are being offered every day to explain this stagnation of development assistance and its decline in real terms. The one given by the magazine essay on corruption in Asia, for example, is both a further description of aspects of Asian culture and a picturesque comment on the flow and manner of disbursement of bilateral development aid to countries of that region.

Specific situations are referred to:

> "In......, an equally permissive atmosphere has been bolstered by war and galloping inflation. Though Premier ......'s hands appear clean, the resort town of......is dotted with elaborate villas of his generals, whose modest salaries are obviously being supplemented from other sources."

> "A pacification official in......province, for example, was caught collecting the pay of a 59—man revolutionary development cadre that in fact had 42 members. Though many sidewalk stalls of black-marketeers have been closed down......still has a thriving trade in illicit Western luxury goods pilfered or brought from huge stocks brought in by.. ...Veterans of the......war are reminded of the

vast, theft--ridden port of...... The......were really much better at this than the......says one."

"Neighbouring......, where the economy is also fattened on a rich diet of......cash, is happily exercising what amounts to Asia's most institutionalised system of corruption."

"In......, last year's......scandals, involving several Cabinet ministers, stirred such a public outcry that Premier...... felt it necessary to 'regain the confidence of the people with 'rigid investigations'. In......, the national government was similarly goaded into commissioning a retired Supreme Court Justice to investigate charges that......had vastly enriched himself and his family in his 16 year tenure as deputy Prime minister, then Prime minister of (his state). But the judge's verdict was Asiatically restrained."

And the conclusion suggested is to promote international contacts aimed at "developing a respect for the benefits of free enterprise".

For this purpose:

"Increased contacts with the rest of the world should help to develop greater understanding of the techniques of government and business competition; and this, in turn, would encourage the confidence of Western leaders and international agencies, tired of seeing their aid money siphoned off into illicit channels."

How similar this conclusion is to that established over 130 years ago by a historian and imperial administrator to deal with the problem of the hierarchy of cultures and in particular the difficulties posed by lower cultures:

"By permitting the natives to fill a few of the high situations, we shall gradually raise a native aristocracy of our own, who would consider the security of their own fortunes identified with the safety of the government."

Perhaps there is hardly any point in confronting the Unesco resolution and the essay's thesis on aid to development; they are so clearly irreconciable.

Unesco holds that inequalities in development constitute an inequity and are a danger to world peace, and appeals to the developed countries to double the flow of funds to the developing areas. The essay takes the view that Asian corruption feeds on aid funds and becomes more deep-rooted. It does not even pause to raise the question why, if government-to-government giving and aid raises problems of graft, bribery and condoned theft, more of such giving and aid should not be channelled through multilateral agencies like the World Bank, the United National and Unesco where these problems do not arise.

The point I do want to make is that there is here not so much an accidental correlation as a fundamental difference in optic, a basic conflict between diametrically opposed concepts of man and his culture, that has led to such different conclusions.

The French language series I have mentioned illustrates this point beyond any shadow of doubt, particularly when it comes to development in general and education in particular. First it expresses doubts as to the wisdom of eradicating illiteracy, by a characteristic reference to the hierarchy of cultures, this time ironically reversed:

> "La culture, le mode de vie de l'Indien sont bien meilleurs que les notres", it says of the Central American Indians.

> "Hors de sa tribu, de ses coutumes, il n'est plus rien, Deracine, a demi—civilise, aussitot une epave, un ivrogne, un esclave mecontent......"

Then it uses illiteracy, quite naturally, to explain and excuse other things:

> "(le) seule mode de government possible, c'est la dictature puisque (le) probleme numero un C'est l'anarchie: on ne fait pas de democratie scandinave avec 95% d'illettres."

Is there not a curious parallel in this way of thinking and the precepts of the utilitarians in the early nineteenth century, who held that to achieve prosperity, good laws were sufficient, and after prosperity was achieved, *then* the people could be given education? If so, it is a parallel which applies even today, in its more refined forms, to the handful of technocrats and economists who still say, and even write, in a rather more oblique language, that while the developed countries should provide education as a function of their demand for instruction, the developing ones should do so, as a function of the supply of resources available to them.

And is there not a profound and tragic relationship between the concepts which underlie the articles that I have sampled, and the horrifying conflicts, the crises and devastating wars, the humiliations of man by man which even now are bringing our world to the edge of the precipice — in Europe and the Americas, in Africa, in the Middle East in Asia?

The question may be asked: But what can Unesco do about this?

We live in a world which spends more than 15 times as much on defence as it does on helping the developing countries to over-come the very causes of the coming conflagration.

We live in a world in which the arsenals, the fortresses of a few countries cost more per year than the total national income of *all* the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, in which hundreds of millions of school-children and parents, adults and youth, read daily newspapers and listen to radios which speak of "kill ratios", of debts "which must be repaid by blood", of "the need for vigilance at the frontiers", of "sacred war" and "pre-emptive strikes", of inferior races and peoples and nations.

The art of the impossible:

Can Unesco do anything about this, with its pitiful resources and its impossible mandate enshrined in its Constitution and the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights? Can Unesco learn the art of the impossible?

I do not know, but if Unesco cannot, what other agency could? And before we speak of resources, we must look further into objectives and methods.

First of all, should we not learn from the experience of the Major Project, both fruitful and disappointing as it was, that there are differences between the audience for our work and the public we are trying to reach, that the world of public opinion cannot be reached urgently enough, and with enough concentrated impact, through the world of scholarship? That the more than 20,000,000 people we succeeded in reaching are those who did not need to be convinced, while the billions we did not reach, ignorant "of each other's ways and lives", were those most in need of the message which all our Member States and our Constitution itself has asked us to convey?

Secondly, is it not time that we went beyond the neutral dissemination of information to the active support of a position, the promotion of a doctrine approved by the governments of the world? Is it not time to recognise that the message which Unesco has to offer to the world is something which no scholarship' however erudite, no science, however precise, can give to the human heart?

And are we ready now, after thirty years, not only to encourage positive manifestaitons, sponsor translations, publicize achievements. facilitate exchanges, but also to confront the very doctrine which the Organization was created to fight against? Is it not time to struggle against misunderstanding in the same way we work to eliminate illiteracy and racism, as an injustice to be stamped out, not a scandal to be covered up?

It may be said that to attack is dangerous. Unesco must conciliate, not divide; it must smooth over differences, not accentuate them, I agree. Unesco must conciliate; Unesco must harmonise; Unesco must provide the synthesis. But before

accomplishing these ultimate objectives and in order to achieve them, it must do something more.

Our own history has taught us that it is by fighting against injustice that we define human rights. Does it not have another lesson in store, that it is only by recognizing our failure to see one another as human beings that we will come to know what is man?

Is it not by recognizing and fighting against the distrust and scorn and ignorance among ourselves, the humiliation of humiliating others, that the science of human spirit will grow and flourish? And is it not through this art of the impossible, that we will come at long last to construct the defences of peace, not in one nation or continent, not for one race or culture or religion for these are only defences, transitory and penetrable as any other—but founded in the intellectual and moral solidarity of all mankind?

AYYAPPAN

BY

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Ayyappan or Śāstā is a popular sylvan deity of Kēraḷa worshipped from time immemorial. According to the legends narrated in the *Kēralotpatti*, Paraśurāma consecrated 108 temples dedicated to Śāstā in the different parts of the mountainous regions and 108 temples dedicated to Kālī in the plains to protect Kēraḷa from any possible encroachment by the sea. Even now there are several temples dedicated to Ayyappan or Śāstā in the different parts of the land, Tiruvellakkāvu, Camravaṭṭam, Neṭṭiśśēri, Ārāṭṭupuḻa, Āryaṅkāvu, Kuḷattūrpuḻa, etc. Of these the most famous and popular is the one on the Śabari hills in the interior of the thick forest near the Pampā river, which attracts millions of devotees every year.

According to the legends popular in Kēraḷa, Ayyappan or Śāstā was born as the son of Śiva and Mohinī (or Viṣṇumāyā), the enchanting female form of Viṣṇu. The story is that on hearing about Viṣṇu's incarnation as Mohinī, Śiva was curious to have a vision of that beautiful form which had enticed and entranced the demons. At first Viṣṇu was hesitant and reluctant when requested by Śiva; but when pressed by Śiva, he decided to oblige him. He disappeared from the scene and later appeared nearby as a charming young girl playing with a ball. On seeing that divine beauty, Śiva was enamoured of her and forgetting himself and even the presence of Pārvatī with him, he ran towards her. Ayyappan or Śāstā is said to be the result of their union. According to the popular Malayāḷam songs about Ayyappan, he was born from the thigh of Viṣṇumāyā (just as Ūrvaśī was born from the thigh of sage Nārāyaṇa) and was received by Śiva in his hand. He was brought up at Kailāsa as the son of Śiva and Pārvatī.

It is generally thought that this story has no real foundation in ancient literature. It is true that there is no reference to a deity called Śāstā in the Vēdic literature or even in the early Purāṇa texts. It may be noted that even Gaṇapati, a universally worshipped popular Hindu deity, came into the Hindu pantheon only late, and is not referred to even by Kāḷidāsa; the mantra *Gaṇānām tvā gaṇapatim havāmahe* from the *Ṛgvēda* now used in Gaṇēśa worship originally refers to Bṛhaspati. Similarly the popular Ṛgvēdic mantra now used for the worship of Ayyappan is a stanza containing the word *Ārya* but originally referring to Indra. Similarly *Ṛgvēda* X. 9.4 "*śam no devīr abhiṣṭaye*' is used in the worship of Śani (Saturn) because of the similarity of the part '*śam no*' to '*Śani*'. Just as the Bṛhaspati mantra was applied to Gaṇapati because of the existence of the word Gaṇapati in it, the Indra mantra containing the word *Ārya* began to be applied to Ayyappan also.

ābhiḥ spṛdho mithatīr ariṣaṇṇyann amitrasya
vyathayā manyum indra
ābhir viśvā abhiyujo viṣūcīr āryāya viśo 'va tārīr dāsīḥ.

Ṛgveda IV. 25.2.

In the historical poem *Mūṣakavaṃśa* of the 12th century it is stated that King Valabha of Kola country consecrated a temple of Ayyappan in the precincts of the temple of Vaṭukeśvara

Prānte(?) praśāntavipadam śaraṇāgatānām
Caṇḍēsvarasya vaṭukeśvaramandirasya
ākhaṇḍitāribaladussahavīryam āryam
bhaktyā sa devam anayan nṛpatiḥ pratiṣṭhām.

Canto 14, verse 68 quoted by N. V. Krishna Variyar in *Vijñānakērali*, Nov. 1974, p. 554.

In the precincts of the deity Śiva of the Vaṭukēśvara temple, he consecrated with devotion the deity Āryaka, who dispels the calamities of devotees who take refuge in him, and whose irresistable valour destroys the power of enemies.

Regarding the story of the origin of Ayyappan as Harihara-putra we cannot say that there is no reference in Purāṇas. A

part of the story is narrated in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* which describes Śiva as being enamoured on seeing the charming female form of Viṣṇu, and approaching and forcibly embracing her. The later portion about the birth of Śāstā is absent in the *Bhāgavata.* (Skandha 8, Ch. 12).

tato dadarśopavane varastriyam
vicitrapuṣpāruṇapallavadrume |
vikrīḍatīm kandukalīlayā lasad-
dukūlaparyastanitambamekhalām || 18

tasyāḥ karāgrāt sa tu kanduko yadā
gato vidūram tamanuvrajatstriyāḥ |
vāsaḥ sasūtram laghu māruto 'harad
bhavasya devasya kilānupaśyataḥ || 23

tayāpahṛtavijñānastatkṛtasmaravihvalaḥ |
bhavānyā api paśyantyā gatahrīstatpadam yayau || 25

tasyānudhāvato retaścaskandāmogharetasaḥ | 32
yatra yatrāpatanmahyām retastasya mahātmanaḥ |
tāni rūpyasya hemnaśca kṣetrāṇyāsan mahipate || 33

(Then in that garden full of various flowers and tender red leaves he saw a beautiful woman playing with ball, her garments loosening at the girdle; when the ball fell far away from her hand, she followed it; her thin garment, along with the string, was driven away by the wind, even while Lord Śiva was looking on. With his knowledge dimmed by her (beauty) and agitated by passion towards her, he went towards her without shame, even when Pārvatī was there looking at the scene. His seed fell down while he was running; wherever these drops fell down on the earth, they became mines of gold and silver.)

While summarising this story in the *Nārayaṇīya* Melputtūr Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa also does not refer to the birth of Śāstā. (Daśaka 29, verses 8.10).

It is often thought that this story about the origin of Śāstā has no ancient traditional authoritative basis, and that it is a special development of the story in Kēraḷa. But the story is found in many of the Āgama texts and also in some of the Purāṇas.

Thus the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* gives in unequivocal terms reference to God Śāstā and about his birth, in the *Upasaṁhāra-Pāda* (6.6–9):

ādau prādurabhūcchaktirbrahmaṇo dhyānayogataḥ |
prakṛtirnāma sākhyātā devānāmiṣṭasiddhidā |
dvitīyam udabhūd rūpaṁ pravṛtte'mṛtamanthane |
śarvasaṁmohajanakaṁ avāṅmanasagocaram |
yaddarśanādabhūdīśaḥ sarvajño'pi vimohitaḥ |
visṛjya pārvatīm śīghram tayā rudro'tanod ratam |
tasyām vai janayāmāsa śāstāram asurārdanam |

(First *Śakti*, the female power, came out of Brahma while he was in meditation. This is called Prakṛti, the bestower of all desired boons to the gods. The second form of Śakti appeared at the time of the churning of the ocean for nectar, a form beyond the range of words and concepts, which enticed Lord Śiva. On seeing her Śiva, though omniscient, was infatuated by her. Leaving Pārvatī soon, he enjoyed her company and begot in her God Śāstā, the destroyer of demons.)

Similar stories are found in *Kulālaśāstrāgama* (*Śāstotpatti-paṭala*, verses 1–28), *Suprabhēdāgama* (53, verses 3–4);

tām mohinīmaham dṛṣṭvā saṃgato'smi kadācana
jātastadā mahāśāstā

(On seeing that damsel one day, I embraced her; and the great Śāstā was born then.)

See also *Śaṅkarasaṁhitā* of *Skandamahāpurāṇa* Upadeśakāṇḍa, Ch. 66, verse 28.32.

This story about the birth of Ayyappan is mentioned in the beginning of *Gajendramokṣa*, a mediaeval Sanskrit poem from Keraḷa:

kalyāṇam kurutād vo bhūtānām adhipatiḥ sa karuṇābdhiḥ
rakṣārtham sujanānām saṃnidadhat puruvane puṇye
śaktyobhayarūpaḥ san yam kila nāthaḥ sa bhuvanacakrasya
cakriṇi mātari janayāmbabhūva jagadavanajanitaratim

yasya ca bhājakarūpaprasādato viśvavitatavimalayāśāḥ
yamayāmāsa sumedhāḥ kathāsudhām vāsudevakaviḥ.

(May Śāstā, the Lord of all beings, Bhūtanātha, the ocean of compassion, give you happiness—the God who is present at the sacred Puruvana temple to protect the virtuous. This God who is interested in protecting the world was begotten in mother Viṣṇu by the great Lord of the Universe who split himself into two parts as Śiva and Viṣṇu, by his powers. It is by the grace of this God that poet Vāsudeva composed the sweet Yamaka poems and became famous throughout the whole world.)

These lines also refer to the popular tradition that the Yamaka poet Vāsudeva, author of the *Yudhiṣṭhiravijaya*, *Tripuradahana* and *Śaurikathodaya* got his poetic talents by the blessing of the deity Śāstā of the Tiruvellakkāvu temple at Perumanam.

According to another version of the story of Śāstā's birth mentioned in some Malayāḷam songs on Ayyappan and in the Tamil work *Ālaṅkuṭi Sthalapurāṇa*, Viṣṇu's incarnation as Mohinī was to destroy Bhasmāsura, also called Vṛkāsura, who, getting a boon from Śiva to have the power of reducing to ashes anybody whom he touched on the head with his hand, wanted to test the effect of his power on the benefactor Śiva himself ; Śiva began to run away in fright until Viṣṇu appeared before the demon and enticed him cleverly. The story of Vṛkāsura is found in the *Bhāgavāta* too, but here Viṣṇu appears not as a young woman but as a boy (Skanda. 10 ch. 88). See also *Narāyanīya* (89.5)

In a Dhyanaśloka given in the *Tantrasamuccaya* of the fifteenth century Ayyappan is described as having his wife Prabhā and his son Satyaka on either side :—

Snigdhārālavisārikuntalabharam siṃhāsanādhyāsinam
sphūrjatpatrasukḷptakuṇḍalam athe-ṣviṣvāsabhṛddordvayam
nīlakṣaumavasam navīnajalada-śyāmam prabhāsatyaka-
sphāyatpārśvayugam suraktasakalākalpam smared āryakam

(Meditate on Ayyappan (Āryaka), with his glossy and curled hair spread out, seated on a throne, his ear-ornaments having

prominent designs of leaves, carrying in his two hands a bow and arrows, putting on a dark silk garment, himself shining (black) like the new clouds, having on either side (his wife) Prabhā and (son) Satyaka, and having red ornaments).

In Tamiḻnāḍu, the village deity Aiyanār, also called Cāttan, is worshipped as the son of Śiva and Viṣṇu, Hariharaputra (Arikaraputtiran or Mālarañcay). He is described as moving on a white elephant, *Veḷḷayānaivākanan*: as the husband of Pūrṇa and Puṣkalā (*Pūranaikeḷvan* and *Puṭkalaimaṇālan*), as the upholder of Dharma (Aṛattaikkāppan). According to the lexicons, etc. he is also having the cock as his banner (Koḻikkoḍiyōn), and the Lord who is dark in colour (*Kaṭalniṛavaiyan*); he is also sometimes described as having a green horse (*Paccaippariyuḷḷon*). temples dedicated to Cāṭṭanār (Śāstā) or Aiyanār existed in different parts of Tamiḻnāḍu even in ancient times; one of the most popular is that at Tiruppiṭavūr; this is referred to in *Puṛanānūru*. (Piṭavūr arappēr cātta).

According to the *Periyapurāṇam* of Cēkkiḻār, Tiruppiṭavūr is the place where Mahāśāstā explained to the world the great teachings which he learned at Kailāsa when Cēramān Perumāḷ Nāyanār recited his *Tirukailāsañānavula*. In the Tēvāram, Tirunāvukkarasu, well known as Appar, refers to Śiva as the father of Śāstā (Sāttanaimakanāi vaittār).[1] Even now images of Aiyanār are found in different parts of Tamiḻnādu, some on the back of elephant, some on horseback, some with Pūrṇā and Puṣkalā on either side. The image of Śāstā at Thycaud, Trivandrum, in the Sukhāsana posture with a tapering crown on the head is similar to the Aiyanār image at Thiruppalātturai. A close comparison of the Aiyanār worship in Tamiḻnāḍu with the Ayyappan worship in Kēraḷa will clearly indicate the essential basic identity of the two; while Aiyanār in Tamiḻnāḍu is a village deity, Ayyappan has been 'Sanskritized' and included in the orthodox pantheon, though he still retains the popular appeal, and is worshipped by all classes of people. The name Cāṭṭanār is found even in ancient

1. Verses 4475, Madras edn. 1953.

times. One of the Tamiḻ classics, *Maṇimēkalai* was composed by Cīrttalai Cāttanār. Reference to the power of Cāttanār is found in the other Tamiḻ classic *Cilappatikāram* (IX. 15) while giving the story of Mālati unwittingly causing the death of a child of another girl and later being helped by Cāttan to bring the child back to life. It may be noted that Cāttan, identified with Śāstā, has nothing to do with Cāttan, the evil spirit which is called *Cāttan* in Malayāḷam.

AYYAPPAN AND THE BUDDHA

The possibility of Śāstā or Ayyappan being identical with the Buddha has been pointed out by some scholars. Prof. F. W. Thomas stated that 'after the earliest Hinduism or Vedic Aryanism, there came a period when Buddhism was strong in the land as evidenced by the designation of Śāstā'. It is true that Śāstā is one of the synonyms of the Buddha; the absence of caste distinction among the Sabarimala pilgrims and their 'Saraṇam viḷi', are reminiscent of Buddhist practices. But the similarity cannot be stretched further. The images of Ayyappan show affinity with the Aiyanār images in Tamiḻnāḍu, much more than with the images of the Buddha. Śāstā is conceived as a hunter with a bow and arrows in his hands, ready to kill the wicked and protect the virtuous; in some temples he is leading a householder's life with Pūrṇā and Puṣkalā as his wives. It may be that the tolerant spirit of Ayyappan worship appealed to many Buddhists, but there is no direct association between Ayyappan and the Buddha.

ĀṚUPAṬAVĪṬU

Just as in the case of Skanda or Murugan, six different places are associated with the divine presence under different stages of life 'Āṛupaṭaivīṭu' — Svāmimalai, Tiruttaṇi, Tirupparaṅkuṇḍrum, Paḻani, Paḻamutirççōlai and Tiruççendūr—in the case of Śāstā too six sacred temples in Kēraḷa are considered to be the *Āṛupaṭavīṭu.* Kuḷattūrpuḻa, Erumeli, Āryaṅkāvu, Aççankovil, Śabarimalai and Kāntamala are associated with Śāstā's presence as a boy, a hunter, a householder (with his wives Pūrṇā and Puṣkalā

on either side), a Vānaprastha, a sannyāsin and a Jīvanmukta respectively.

Though most of the Śāstā temples are situated in the dense forests and on hills, some of the famous temples are also on the plains — like Camravaṭṭam, Neṭṭiśśēri, Tiruvellakkāvu etc.

Ayyappan worship in Kēraḷa can be traced back to a very ancient period. In the 'Saṅghakkaḷi'[1] — a semi-religious and humorous dramatic entertainment performed by the military Nambūtiri Brahmins from about the twelfth century onwards, now almost defunct — references to Ayyappankāvu and the Teyyāṭṭu and Ayyappan Pāṭṭu performed to propitiate Śāstā, are found.

> " Ayyappan kāvil aṭippen talippen
> Tēyyāṭṭum paṭṭum orūṭṭum kaḷippen ".

Ayyappan Teyyāṭṭu, performed usually in Ayyappan temples, uses several songs describing the various stories like Amṛtamathana, Mohinī incarnation of Viṣṇu, the birth of Śāstā etc. This must have been quite popular like the Teyyāṭṭu of Kālī, performed in Kālī temples.

Śabarimala Śāstā :

According to the popular traditions connected with the temple at Śabarimala, Lord Śāstā was born as a human being and served for twelve years under a king of Pantalam. The king who had no issues found a new-born baby in the Sabari forest where he had gone for hunting: The king took the child to his palace and brought him up like his son giving him proper education. Since a gem had been found tied round his neck when he was discovered he was given the name Maṇikaṇṭhan. The queen who was at first affectionate towards him, later began to get jealous when she had a son of her own. Maṇikaṇṭhan grew up to a young boy of twelve years of age and was very popular everywhere. At the instigation of the minister, the queen pretended to be suffering from a severe stomach ache, and they managed to induce the corrupt physician to prescribe leopardess milk as the medicine. On hearing about it, Maṇikaṇṭhan offered to go to the forest to fetch it. The queen and the minister expected

his death, but Maṇikaṇṭhan, who was really an incarnation of Śāstā, killed Mahiṣī, a demoness in the form of a female bison; and returned to the palace on a big tigress, accompanied by several tigers. On seeing this the queen was frightened and confessed her guilt. The king and queen prayed to Maṇikaṇṭhan for forgiveness. Maṇikaṇṭhan said that he had completed his work, and disappeared into the Śabari hills. The king who realised that it was Lord Ayyappan himself who had served for twelve years under him caused a temple to be erected in the hills, as suggested by Maṇikaṇṭhan.

Some of the popular songs sung during the Ayyappan pāṭṭu make him a Malayāḷi boy who worked under a Pāṇḍya king at Madurai. It is also stated that Ayyappan was responsible for winning over a Muslim invader, Vāvar — described as the son of Pāttumma (Fatima) at Takṛtittān — and establishing religious and communal harmony in the land. According to some other songs Ayyappan had also been to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in a boat specially made for the purpose. Another song refers to a young Īḻava girl Pūṅkoṭi who fell in love with Ayyappan, but in all these songs Ayyappan is described as a serene boy leading a life of celibacy. Several attempts have been made by devotees and scholars to bring together all these stories in a connected manner. It is fairly certain that the Lord Ayyappan at Sabarimala represents not only Lord Śāstā, but also his human incarnation as Maṇikaṇṭhan.

Pilgrimage :

Annual pilgrimage is undertaken by devotees to the sacred temple at Śabarimala, a place sanctified by the great Śabari, whose story is narrated in the Rāmāyaṇa. Pilgrims desire to have a darśan of the Lord on the first of the month of Makara (Makarasaṅkrānti) and since the temple is in the interior of a dense forest, the pilgrims have to start very early to get there in time. The pilgrims to Śabarimala lead a life of discipline, regulating their habits and diet and are not unduly attached to wordly pleasures and material gains during the period. They strictly adhere to celibacy in thought, word and action; bathe in

the morning and evening, visit temples and lead a religious life of prayer and bhajan; they take only vegetarian food, and avoid drinks. Such a life for several days make them fit physically, mentally and spiritually to take the arduous pilgrimage. Normally they are to observe the austerities for a period of 41 days from the 1st of Vṛscika month, called the Maṇḍala period.

The inauguration of the austerities connected with the pilgrimage starts with the wearing of a string of Tulasi or Rudrākṣa (Mālādhāraṇa). After this function the pilgrim has no social obligations and is free even from pollution at the death of any relative. He is called Ayyappan; and among the Ayyappan pilgrims there is no caste distinction. The pilgrims wear black or blue garments throughout the period. The most experienced pilgrim in the group, called Gurusvāmi or Paḷamasvāmi, performs the rite of placing the string of beads round the neck of the other pilgrims, especially the novices or kannikkārans starting for the first time.

After the period of austere and clean life the group of pilgrims with the Gurusvāmi as the leader prepares for the journey with the *Keṭṭunira* or *Mudranira.* A black cotton bag with two compartments, called Irumuṭi, is to be filled; the front compartment is to hold the offerings to the deity — (1) a ghee-filled coconut, (2) Kaṇi-poṉṉu, the offering of gold, with betel leaf etc. in a small packet (3) coconut to be broken at the temple (4) ingredients for Pañçāmṛta (5) camphor, incense stick etc. — and the other compartment will contain provisions for the pilgrim's trip to the temple. Both parts are then tied together to form two bundles under one knot. The Gurusvāmi helps the pilgrims to put the Irumuṭi on his head and chanting 'Svāmiye Śaraṇam Ayyappa' the pilgrims leave the place and start the pilgrimage.

There are many routes to Śabarimala. Erumeli is the gateway to the longest and most arduous route consisting of 45 miles. A Muslim mosque is there without any statue, but believed to be dedicated to Vāvar. The Ayyappan temple there has Śāstā in the form of a hunter. The devotees, especially the Kannis, perform Pēṭṭa Tuḷḷal — a dance, smearing the body with different

colours, carrying in their hands an arrow, a wooden mace, a wooden sword, leaves and vegetables, and rhythmically dancing to the sound of the drum. '*Ayyappa Tintakattom, Svāmiye Tintakattom*; the dance starts from the small temple of Kaṟuppu-svāmi, goes to Vāvar's mosque and then to the temple of Ayyappan. After the Pēṭṭa tuḷḷal, the pilgrims bathe in the river and put on clean clothes.

From Erumeli the pilgrims walk, generally on bare foot for about four miles, cross the Perūr Tōḍu (canal) by a bridge, walk through bushes to Kāḷaghaṭṭi and then to the Aḻuta river. Walking up the Aḻutameḍu (which is a steep one) the pilgrims reach the Kallıḍāṅkunu where they throw a stone taken from the Aḻuta river earlier; this is said to be the place where Mahiṣi was killed by Ayyappan. The Aḻuta hill ends and Karimala starts with the Karimala Tōḍu. The Karimala ascent has to be climbed in a winding manner in stages. Ceriya Ānavaṭṭam and Valiya Ānavaṭṭam form, the descent from Karimala before reaching the river Pampā.

There is another route to Pampā from Kottayam through Cālakkayam which is accessible to cars and buses, and which is becoming more and more popular.

The beauty of the Pampā and its banks has been well described by Vālmīki in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The pilgrims stay here for sometime to take rest. The day before Makaraviḷakku is Pampāviḷakku when Ayyappan is said to be present there. Small floats decorated with lights are sent down the river. After leaving Pampā the pilgrims have to climb the Nīlimala, which is steep and slippery and pass the Appāççimeḍu before reaching the Śabari Pīṭham, supposed to be the place where Śabari had her abode at the time of meeting Rāma. Two or three miles from here is the Śaram kuttiyālu (though no pipal tree is found there now). The pilgrims leave the arrow, club and sword taken with them from Erumeli at this place; Ayyappan is said to have discharged his arrow from Erumeli to strike on the banyan tree here.

The temple is visible now. The pilgrims steadily move on with the Irumuṭi on their head and reach the Sannidhānam, the

fort of the Sacred Eighteen Steps, Patineṭṭāmpaṭi. Climbing the steps one by one, the pilgrim breaks a coconut on that step corresponding to the number of his pilgrimage. After mounting the steps and having a darśan of the Lord, the pilgrim goes round visiting Gaṇēśa and Nāgarāja and stands before Ayyappan. The offerings are made; the ghee-coconut is broken and *abhiṣeka* performed by the priest.

The rituals connected with the pilgrimage to Śabari hills and worship there are considered to have a symbolic significance. It is the spirit or the *Cetanā* who performs the journey to the abode of the deity which is his own realised soul. The load of offering carried is his own life, the bundle of sweet and bitter things. The front knot of Irumuṭi may stand for the *Saṁçita ķarma* and the back knot the *Prārabdha karma.* The spirit has been travelling for long on the rugged path. Coming to the presence of the Lord, it is excited into an ecstatic state. The heaps of sins ignited by devotion is the camphor offered. The mental knot of the ego, symbolized by the coconut, breaks by itself in His presence, and the sweet juice which flows out of it—the ecstatic bliss experienced is offered as water to wash his feet.

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CONSEQUENCES OF UNAPPROACHABILITY IN TRAVANCORE

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In keeping up ceremonial observances and caste distinctions, in invoking traditions and customs to regulate social life, South India was more bigoted and reactionary than North India; and strangely enough, of all places in South India, Kēraḷa, particularly Travancore and Cochin took the sin of pride in the matter of extending the limits of caste pollution to unapproachability and even unseeability.

Caste system here brought into being a peculiar social milieu, the like of which no eye had seen or heart conceived any where else in the world, wherein a Hindu's approach near another Hindu was strictly conditioned by the superior—inferior relation of each in the caste hierarchy. The punctilious observance of the institutional regulations as to untouchability and unapproachability, *toḍil* and *tīṇḍal* from the very ancient times resulted in the stratification of the society into mutually excluding antagonistic groups. The belief was that not only the touch but the proximity of certain classes of people would cause pollution to the higher castes. They were, therefore, treated as out-caste, or non-caste Hindus; their movement was restricted to certain areas, which the superior ones would not frequent or when they were allowed to use public roads they had to be on their guard while moving about by making loud noise, lest, unwittingly they should defile a Brahmin or a Nāyar. Thus, James Forbes wrote, "The Pooleahs are not permitted to breathe the same air with the other castes nor to travel on the public road; if by accident they should be there and perceive a Brahmin or Nāir at a distance, they must instantly make a loud howling, to warn him

from approaching until they have retired or climbed up the nearest tree."[1]

Right of way was decided by one's caste in the case of Hindus. Higher castes shunned the lower castes because they believed that their touch or even approach within a certain distance caused pollution to them. Untouchability was a matter only of actual contact, but unapproachability implied the idea that the untouchables had an emanation of impurity extending to a certain distance. As a result, orthodox Hindus in Kēraḷa did not permit the lower castes not only to come into actual contact with them but also to approach them within a prescribed distance.[2] This necessitated the prevention of the outcastes from entering roads, schools, offices, and other public places.

In Kēraḷa every caste below the rank of Nāyars, was an untouchable, and therefore, an unapproachable caste, however clean or well placed its members be. Thus an Iḷava Magistrate in the eyes of a Brahmin or a Nāyar delinquent, was just an untouchable who caused distance pollution to him. Instances are on record of the insolent attitude of such high caste men in the presence of judicial officers of lower rank in caste.[3]

Rules of unapproachability, prescribed scale of distances within which a Brahmin would be polluted if the lower castes approached him. Thus limits of distance pollution for a Brahmin

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1. James Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 253. According to Barbosa, a Nāyar woman touched by a Pulayan is out-caste for life and thinks only of leaving her home for fear of polluting her family. In this circumstance it was but natural that the untouchables were shunned by the caste Hindus.

2. J. H. Hutton says "many castes are regarded as polluting by proximity, and are not allowed to approach within certain distances of Hindu temples; so much is this the case that common expressions of spatial measurement are, or were, *Tiyapad*, *Cherumapad*, etc. indicating a distance equivalent to that within which a Tiyan or a Cheruman, as the case may be of course, may not approach a man of high caste." *Caste in In India*, p. 179.

3. N. R. Krishnan, *Iḷavar Annum Innum*, (Mal.), pp. 188-90.

were 64 feet from a Paṛaya, 54 feet from a Pulaya, and 30 feet from a Tīya or Iḻava.[4] Distance pollution was observed even among the lower castes. Pulayas, for instance, if polluted by the near approach of a Nāyādi or Ulladan, were enjoined to take seven baths and shed a few drops of blood from the little finger. "In rural areas in Travancore, Cochin and Malabar" says O'Malley, "a Pariah may be required to keep further away and is prevented, at any rate in the day-time, from using the roads in quarters inhabited by Brahmins. His right of way along other roads is so far limited that, like a leper in the medieval ages in Europe, he should call out to give notice of his unclean presence, and when he comes within the prescribed distance, leave the road and get along, as best he can, in the fields, even if they are under water. The time required to go from one place to another consequently depends, not merely on distance, but on the number of Brahmins using the road."[5]

Apart from the humiliation it caused to the lower castes and the galling wounds it inflicted on their self-respeet, unapproachability made heavy inroads into their natural right as citizens of the country to which the upper castes had no superior claim. Victims of this social injustice, young school-going children belonging to these castes had to walk for hours to cover a short distance from home to school and *vice versa*,

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4. Jonathan Duncan remarks that a Nāyar may approach a Nambudiri Brahman, but must not touch him; a Tīyan (toddy drawer) must remain 36 paces off; a Malayan (i.e. Pāṇan, exorcist, basketmaker) must remain "three or four" paces further; a Pulayan (cultivator and untouchable) must keep 96 paces from a Brahman. A Tīyan must not come within 12 paces of a Nāyar; a Malayan (Pāṇan) must keep 3 or 4 paces further off, and a Pulayan must still keep his 96 paces from a Nāyar as well as a Brahman. A Pāṇan may approach but not touch a Tīyan, but a Pulayan must not even approach a Pāṇan. It he wishes to address a, man of higher caste, he must stand a far off and "cry aloud". If a Pulayan touches a Brahman, the Brahman must at once bathe, read "much of the divine books" and change his Brahmanical thread. A Nāyar, on the other hand, or any other caste polluted by a Pulayan's touch, need only bathe to purify himself (J. H. Hutton, *op. cit.*, pp. 79–80).

5. L. S. S. O'Malley, *India, Caste customs*, pp. 141–42.

taking diversions or going back all the way they had traversed in order to avoid a number of Brahmins or Nāyars. Many tales of such harrowing experiences were recounted to this writer by aged men whose caste rank is lower to the Nāyars.

Untouchability and unapproachability were ubiquitous in Malabār society and they had left their black trails all over the life pattern of the land, in economic, social, religious and political institutions. Socially they created a condition of extreme inequality, the lower orders having been prevented from the enjoyment of elementary facilities of social intercourse. Economically, conditions were created for the rise of serfdom. The administrative structure was also feudalised resulting in rigid political domination of Brahmins. As a result of all these, slavery became a characteristic feature of the Kēraḷa society.[6]

Lower castes were, for all purposes, treated as slave classes and were systematically exploited and reduced to indigence. As the Proclamation of 987 M.E. of Rāṇi Lakshmi Bāi rightly pointed out "to buy at a cheap rate the boys and girls of the several low caste people of the country, sell them for a higher price, take them to distant places and pay tolls at sea ports and thus make a regular bargain of them" had become a "disgraceful custom" in Travancore. But unfortunately here, the State itself was the biggest slave holder who even let them out for remunerative rental to individuals and institutions. By the census of 1836 the population of Travancore, was 12,80,668. Of these there were 38,625 Paṛayar, 90,598 Pulayar, 31,891 Coṛavar and 3750 Paḷḷar. In all 1,64,864 slaves, not to mention 16,226 Malay Vaylar and other hill tribes, many of them in a state of vassalage Iḷavas, comparatively better placed than these tribes, and forming the majority of the peasant population of the land, were also treated as not better than slaves by the superior classes and were subjected to cruel exactions. Ward and Conner in their *Memoir of the Travancore Survey* referred to them as follows: "Martyrs to the distinction of castes, they are treated by the higher orders with

6. For details of slavery in Travancore see K. K. Kusuman, *Slavery in Travancore.*

supercilious scorn; too poor to invite their rapacity, they are held by them in bondage, at least they are awed into a servitude, mitigated to be sure, when contrasted to that of the praedial slaves".[7] Such being the case, the number of people reduced to slavery or serfdom in Travancore was larger than freemen. The extreme misery of these classes was noted by all foreign observers and, many local administrators too, in their reports, had adverted to the existence of hard conditions among them produced by caste restrictions. We may quote with facility some extracts from a letter of the Dewan Peishkar in Quilon to the Dewan of Travancore written on 30, September 1869.

"The Ellavers in this part of the country, used to be forcibly taken away from their houses and families by the Sirkār peons, to be employed to watch Sirkār Tānāhs, Bankshalls, Granaries etc. and detained on such work for not less than three or four consecutive days. The evils of such a system of impressment are too well known to require any explanation from me. Generally it was those who could not purchase escape from this oppression, or in other words, the poor and the helpless, that suffered most.

Another kind of impressment which these castes suffered was the compulsory and gratuitous use of their agency in the conveyance of what were called "Sirkār loads" from one Tānāh to another. They were also employed to watch Sirkār timber lying at the excise stations, to watch elephant pits in distant and dangerous jungles, to carry salt from the wholesale to retail Bankshalls, to carry cadjans from the landing place to Bankshalls, to collect and supply firewood to pagodas, ootoopoorahs and in various other works—*all which work was exacted from them without payment.* Their complaints were seldom heard, if at all, because all such work was exacted in the name of the Sirkār and apparently in its interests.

The Sirkār annually required carpenters for forest work. They would not go to the jungles either from fear of fever or on

7. Ward and Connor, *Memoirs of the Survey of Travancore and Cochin States*, p. 115.

account of insufficiency of the wages, allowed by the Sirkār. The demand for the supply of these workmen was repeatedly made and pressed strongly by the forest department. Peons were sent in quest of them, and the low caste carpenters were seized, and, to prevent all chance of escape or flight, secured in Tānāhs and sent up under a Tānāh Escort.

Moreover. in former days, the Kīlavers should not milk cows, should not wear silk cloth, should not use any conveyance nor wear golden jewels however rich, should not tile their houses, should not trade, should not play upon certain musical instruments.

Formerly the females of the Ellavar caste could not cover their bosoms. Some time ago, at Paravoor in the Quilon talook, the more decent of them, attempted to break through this restriction. This irritated the feelings of the higher castes, who attacked and assaulted the women and tore off their clothes; but police immediately interfered and set matters aright." [8]

This is by no means an exahustive list of disabilities suffered by the lower castes in Travancore. The ignorance and prejudice of the higher classes put impediments in the way of the material and moral development of the depressed classes. All their objections against improvement of the lot of these men were the resultant of the vectorial elements of untouchability and unapproachability that formed an integral part of the religious life of the Hindus. What we infer from the facts mentioned is that the State was from every angle of vision purely, of the orthodox caste Hindus, for the orthodox caste Hindus and, to be sure, by the orthodox caste Hindus. In the enormity of excesses committeed by the superior castes in the name of *Sanātana dharma*, the State had a major share. To interdict lower castes from entering roads leading to temples, it appears, the Government of Travancore were more anxious than the Brahmins. Dewan Mādhava Row wrote to the Resident saying that if the lower castes were allowed to make use of those roads,

8. *Letter from the Dewan Peishkar of Quilon to the Dewan of Travancore,* dated 30, September 1869. Cover File......English Records, Secretariat, Trivandrum.

"I think it will not only be an objection, but will also prove contrary to the rules and existing customs hitherto observed in this State". The reasons adduced were typically priestly and sanguinary too. He said "Suppose there is a small pagoda to which very little regard is paid; it will be considered polluted should any of the lower classes of the above description happen to come close to it, and similarly the entrances of Soodras into the same, who have been polluted by lower classes by happening to meet them within a distance of 64 feet, the pagoda will be considered to have been polluted and it has therefore to undergo a certain process of ceremonies at the cost of the Sirkār from 10 to 1000 Rupees according to the magnificence and sanctity of the pagodas. The Namboory Brahmins who have been polluted of the above description will be ex-communicated unless they undergo certain process of ceremonies and change their Brahmanical thread."[9] It is quite clear from this that the State prejudice was as weighty, if not more, as the Brahminical prejudice who prevented the lower castes from asserting their social rights. Seldom do we come across a government in the annals of nations that observed distance and ritual pollution with such punctilio as the Travancore Government.

In all modern societies, with the growth of civilization and the establishment of strong monarchies, we find institutions of property, marriage and government assuming definite shape, thereby bringing in their train the benefits of positive law. But in Kēraḷa, especially in Travancore and Cochin, positive law remained lackadaisical and was to a degree obsequious to custom. That only showed the reluctance of the society to emerge from the idyllic natural order of the primitive community. In the case of Kēraḷa, there is much meaning in the statement that in the determination and judgment of human conduct, custom remained to the end, the force behind the law, the power behind the throne, and the last magistrate of man's lives.

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9. *Letter from the Dewan of Travancore to the Resident*, dated 20, October 1869. *Ibid.*

Kings here sought to uphold *dharma* which, though not an *arte fact*, but a natural growth of consensus and communal life, was the rule of life for each man as determined by his caste and station which, in reality, was prescribed by the Brahmins. In dispensing justice with an eye to *dharma*, the king always followed the established order and customs of the society, howsoever that may affect the well being of the majority of his subjects. In such wise, the ruler of Travancore in 1829 issued the following proclamation: "As it is not reasonable on the part of Shānār women to wear cloths over their breasts, such custom being prohibited, they are required to abstain in future from covering the upper part of their body."[10] It is clear from this that the king had no choice but to implement what was just and reasonable according to usage (mostly fashioned after the likes and dislikes of Brahmins), what was not contrary and harmful to the caste susceptabilities of the Savarṇas. *Sāstraic* injunctions were generally followed; but the Malabār Brahmins prescribed their own rules to regulate social and religious life which in most cases reflected their hatred and made the princes follow them to the last letter. The best illustration of this fact is provided in the Proclamation of the Chieftain of Kārthikappaḷḷy which says "If there are, in our kingdom any women so immoral as to be unwilling to submit to the wishes of men of own or higher castes, they should be immediately put to death." Foreign observers have noticed that this decree was scrupulously being followed in that country.[11]

This strong attachment to the *varṇa dharma* led to the perpetuation of an extremely unequal society in Kēraḷa which tended to obliterate all feeling of sympathy for the lower classes and to estrange man from man. The social order in the late nineteenth and early twentieth countries was more rigid and stereo-typical, less humane and indulgent, to the extent that the lower castes lived a life of misery and perpetual agony while the upper castes enjoyed life at the expense of the formers' disabilities.

10. Augur, *Church History of Travancore*, Appendix p. LVII.

11. James Hough, *History of Christianity in India*, Vol. 2, pp. 174–5.

James Forbes draws a picture of that malevolent *varṇa*-oriented society which existed in 1834 and says that "the laws, manners and customs are the same at this day as they were some thousand years ago."[12] In every detail it agreed with the society obtained here in 1925 at the time of Vaikkom satyāgraha.

For rendering a vast multitude of people in a country (seemingly with their acquiescence) powerless and flaccid, through their power of intellect and superior spiritual attainments, history provides no better example that the establishment of Brahmin supremacy in Kēraḷa and the consequent prostration of the lower classes. This interesting and cruel story lies at the back of the struggle of the backward classes for civil liberty in Travancore, which starting in the 19th century gathered momentum in the first quarter of the present century,

The might and main of the Nambudiris overshadowed the sovereign power and rendered all attempts of the masses to assert their legitimate rights to equality and social justice futile. Every man here, the ruler or the ruled, was given to the pathetic plight of following some powerful master. The sovereign was in a curious position, very powerful but at the same time lamentably slavish, powerful in relation to the subjects other than Brahmins and slavish in relation to Brahmins. Nambudiris were slaves of their own customs.[13] The power exercised by them on the ruler was so devastatingly trenchant that the royal authority was wholly

12. James Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 237–44.

13. In consequence of their customs, their women folk remained in a state of slavery and most of them died with unfulfilled desires. While the Nambudiri bachelors solaced themselves with their Sūdra loves, the Nambudiri spinsters, secluded and vigilantly guarded in the privacy of their house, lived and died unmarried. But the insensible customs led many of these ladies to moral lapses also. It was said that when the Nambudiri females died in a state of celibacy, so tenacious were the Nambudiris of their observances, that the corpses were made to undergo all the ceremonies of marriage. See *Census Report of Native Cochin* 1875–76, p. 35.

utilised for the appeasement of that community;[14] on several occasions Brahmins even went to the extent of punishing the kings for their lapses on that count.[15]

The Brahmins who held sway over the *Dēvaswoms* possessing immense wealth and landed property and who were "little territorial sovereigns" in their own right, invoked the assistance of Samantha Kshatriyas and controlled the life and destiny of thousands of people throughout the land. *Dēvaswoms* exercised sovereign functions within the limits of their landed property as did wealthy classes of Brahmins generally within the limits of their *Sankētams* or tracts assigned to Brahmins. The majority of people in Kērala came under the sway of either a *Sankētam* or a *dēvaswom*. The life and liberty of the tenants attached to these Brahmins institutions were decisively guided by them. The managers and trustees enacted rules and laws for the administration of their lands and enforced them independently without reference to the king. Their influence on the society is well brought out in the following passage by Shangoonny Menon:—

14. The records of Travancore Government show the extent to which the administration cared for the welfare of the Brahmins at the expense of the poorer sections of the community. Temples were constructed and lands donated for their benefit; the temple property or *dēvaswom* lands were managed by them only. In course of time *Dēvaswoms* were converted into *brahmaswoms* with the full knowledge of the Government. Again, for the maintenance of indolent, idle, and vagrant Brahmins, the Sirkār instituted *Uttupuras* or public inns throughout the State, where free meals were provided. Writing in 1854, Dalton noted "These places are forty in number; at one half of them, food is prepared twice a day; at the other half, only once. And so numerous are the priestly applicants for the royal bounty, that their maintenance costs the Government no less than £ 25,000 a year. The other religious institutions and temples swallow up £ 51,000 more; and thus the Brahmins obtain from this petty state, with a revenue of £ 370,000, no less than £ 76,000 or one fifth of the whole". (W. A. Dalton, *Lectures on Missions* in India, p. 125). The gravity of the injustice involved in this misplaced royal munificence will appear to be more ghastly when we realise that the total population of Travancore in 1836 was 12,80,000 of which the number of Brahmins was only 28,000.

15. Elankulam Kunjan Pillai, *Studies in Kērala History*, p. 346.

"Tradition shows that the life and property of the *Dēvaswom* tenants were at the mercy of the *Dēvaswom* community. In every pagoda, before the commencement of the annual *utsavam*, festival, which generally begins by a flag being hoisted, such of the *Dēvaswom* tenants, as had committeed any breach of *Dēvaswom* rules were *gibbetted* before the hoisting of the flag and the commencement of the *utsavam.* By such arbitrary conduct of the *Dēvaswom* people the sovereign power was overshadowed, and the king became indifferent to the mode in which affairs were administered within the jurisdiction of *Dēvaswom* and *Brahmaswom* lands......The rise of the *Dēvaswoms* to power greatly affected the military resources of the king whose forces were chiefly constituted of militia trained out of the populace. Now the *Dēvaswom* ryots became the largest portion of the people and they were not permitted to form a portion of the militia."[16]

It is clear from the above that the people in Travancore with small exceptions, came under the sovereign powers of several hundreds of *Dēvaswoms* and *Brahmaswoms* and their destinies were decided by these Brahmin institutions which did not have the charge of their welfare or happiness. The extortionate taxes levied on their person, property, vocation, caste and customary sacraments, were so numerous that they were left with little means to live on and were reduced into miserable food for worm.[17] Not only did they levy taxes, but made war, dispensed justice, punished crimes, and compelled defaulting tenants to pay dues or evicted them.

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16. Shangoonny Menon, *History af Travancore*, pp. 79-80.

17. From an inscription of 3rd century M. E. in the Cape Comorin temple, it is seen that in the *devadañam* village of Kanyākumari there were several taxes such as *ur - Kalañju, Kumara - Kachchanan, min - pattam* etc. among the lower (castes ?), *moram, ilai - vaniya - pattam, ingalasu, Kal - alavu, Kol - alavu, atta - pattam, per mudal - āyam, taraku - kuli* etc.......*antarayams,* which are due from the village (T. A. S. Vol. 8., p. 167). These are by no means the only taxes collected by these autonomous villages. There were scores of such levies mentioned in the inscriptions of the period.

But in modern period, we find them with lesser sovereign powers; they were forced to relinquish them by powerful kings. As a result they started resorting to the established courts of law. Nevertheless, they continued to enjoy most of the immunities of sovereignty on account of the fact that the laws administered were their creation, mostly given by the ancient law-givers like Manu, Āpasthambha and Kamanḍaka. These effectively protected the Brahmin interests and helped establish their supremacy in every sphere of life. Moreover the officers entrusted with the administration of laws were, in the main, Brahmins and also upholders of Brahminism. The political sovereigns, over and above these, had a special obligation towards them, now that these Brahmins were the *Bhūdēvas* who performed the holy *hiraṇyagarbha* ceremony through which *dwijahood* was conferred on them. As powerful a sovereign as Mārthānda Varma, was only a puppet in the hands of his Brahmin minister and other priests. He surrendered his realm as *trippatidānam* to Lord Padmanābha and made himself and his successors *Padmanābha dāsas* on the advice of his Brahmin counsels.

Even during the British period. when the Company's influence was ascending in Travancore, we find an accomplished sovereign like Swāti Tirunāl, pitiably being cowed down by his Brahmin masters. The following account of this king by Rt. Rev. George Trevor Spencer explains the situation well:

> "He speaks English with perfect fluency, is an accomplished Persian and Arabic scholar, and is in other respects unusually well informed having had the advantage of a much better education than commonly falls to the lot of oriental princes. Could he escape from the swaddling bands of the Brahmins, it is supposed that he would shew himself a really enlightened ruler. This however seems almost impossible, as these crafty priests have thrown their meshes so effectively around him that he can scarcely stir hand or foot without their permission. They possess unbounded influence over his mind, the influence which can only be attained by superstition, and the puppet of royalty is

moved according to their will and pleasure by the Brahmanical string. It is very much to be lamented as unquestionably he might do, and probably has the inclination to do, much for his country, which now remains undone. Certainly their terrible religion is the bane and curse of India. The Brahmanical superstition hangs over the land like an impervious murky vapour, and seems to defy the sun of truth to scatter it. The Brahmins here are still all powerful, and are held by the other castes as something far better than men, and very little inferior to Gods. If there were no such people as Brahmins, Trivandrum would be a little centure of civilization, which would eventually produce a most beneficial effect throughout Southern India."[18]

Caste was the deciding factor in social, political and economic relations of the country. It is said that the Nambudiri Brahmins, the highest in caste orders, of Malabār looked down upon the Kings of Travancore as they belonged to a tribe very much below theirs. They regarded as their real ruler the Alvañchērry Thambrakkal of Cochin who alone, they maintained, could try them for their lapses, and award punishments. Mater observed, "The highest class of Nambudiris with rare exceptions, refuse to reside under the sway of the Sūdra Rājah of Travancore and any of their females going south of Quilon are said to lose caste. Hence the Nambudiris, resident within the limits of Travancore, are not recognised as belonging to the purest class."[19] No wonder that the Travancore rulers made it their avowed duty to serve the interests of the Brahmins and thought it only proper to utilise the vast State power to make that tribe content.

The special favours conferred on the Brahmins made them lords of the land, objects of veneration by all. In order to maintain their spiritual predominance and material power, they artfully

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18. George Trevor Spencer, Rt. Rev., *Journal of a Visitation to the Provinces of Travancore and Tinnevelly in the Diocese of Madras - 1840 - 1841.* London 1842, pp. 97–99.

19. Samuel Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, p. 29.

gerrymandered customs and conventions, administrative and socio-economic systems and in short the whole way of life of Kēraḷa in such a way that nobody, including the kings could violate them. Thus the Kings earnestly believed that a "Brahmin's person is holy, his directions are commands, his movements are processions his meal is nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, he is the representative of God on earth."[20]

Under these conditions, it was in the fitness of things that each Malabār law, evinced a special Brahmin impress and each custom emitted a peculiar odour of Brahmin jobbery. Travancore having been comparatively free from foreign conquests or subjugation, had retained the original system unimpaired. That gave the Brahmins special opportunity to enhance their power and influence and to try newer tyrannies that never had been attempted elsewhere in India. Dalton's statement that "the Brahmins are very powerful and exercise more influence on the government in this little state (Travancore) than all the rulers of the rest of India put together"[21] will appear to be more meaningful when we examine the History of Travancore in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Tax-free lands and higher privileges granted to them and the creation of *Dēvaswoms* and *Brahmaswoms* made Brahmins feudal barons and institutions like *toḍil* and *tiṇḍal* or untouchability and unapproachability were invented as necessary safeguards to their economic and social superiority. Divinity inherent in Brahminhood had to be protected at all costs; an insult to it was inconceivable to a true Sanātanist. Everybody including lower caste men looked upon the Brahmin as a *Bhūdēva* and, all including the Kings, dreaded a Brahmin's curse which, they believed in all sincerity, would bring ruination to the victim. Therefore the laws applicable to ordinary citizens were not applicable to Brahmins. A man of inferior caste suffered death for killing another of a superior or inferior caste, but a Brahmin was not to suffer capital punishment for whatever crime he committed. Death punish-

20. Travancore Census Report for 1874-75, p. 191.

21. Dalton, *op.:cit.*, p. 124.

ment for a Brahmin was equivalent to the king committing *Brahmahatya*, the vilest of all sins which would, in its wake, bring crack of doom to the country. When the heaviest of punishments, death, was awarded to the low caste man for a light crime like stealing a nut, the heaviest punishment reserved for the Brahmin was expulsion from caste or, a slavery for such offences as robbery and theft and, banishment for such of those as were convicted of interdining with inferior castes or for having carnal relation with women of out-castes.

It is interesting to see that this exemption of Brahmins from capital punishment was scrupulously effected in the judicial processes of Cochin and Travancore even in 1871 as is eviden from the correspondence between the Dewān of Cochin and the British Resident. The Resident expressed his disapproval of a sentence passed by the Appeal Court, by which the first accusedt a Brahmin and his accomplices were exempted from capital punishment. He recommended that the case may be remanded to the Appeal Court with instructions to the effeet that in cases where murder was brought home to any of His Highness's subjects the caste of the convicted man, be it what it may, should be no bar to sentence of death being passed on him.

To this sober advice of the British Resident, the king reacted sharply. The Dewān wrote:

> "I am directed by His Highness the Rāja to inform you in reply that, according to the Hindu Shāstras the taking away of the life of a Brahmin is an unparalleled sin, and hence whatever may be the crime committed by a Brahmin, he has never hitherto been subjected to capital punishment.
>
> "Neither is it in this country alone that such a law prevails. The law is in force in Travancore and if His Highness is not mistaken, also in the other Hindu States.
>
> "His Highness is aware that Europeans do not, in such cases, take into account the caste or sex of the persons

> committing the offences — but His Highness cannot, without doing great violence to his own feelings and to those of the majority of his subjects, sanction the execution of a sentence of death on a Brahmin or on a female."[22]

The Resident pursued the matter further, but the King was adamant to the point of not withdrawing the exemption of Brahmins from capital punishment. The Dewān again wrote to him that "according to the Shāstras, the commission of murder or any other heinous crime does not make a Brahmin liable for capital punishment although it may render him unfit to associate with persons of his own caste." He quoted the passages from the statute of Manu bearing on the subject, which are as follows:

> "380. Never shall the King slay Brahmin, though convicted of all possible crimes, let him banish the offender from his realm but with all his property secured and his body unhurt.
>
> 381. No greater crime is known on earth than slaying a Brahmin, and the King, therefore, must not even form in his mind an idea of killing a priest."[23]

All these clearly indicate how strong was the orthodox Hindu feeling for the special status of the Brahmins. Equally strong were their feelings against the lower castes; hard were Manu's regulations and terrible was their impact on them. One of his *obiter dicta* was "the impure can never be relieved from bondage, though he may be emancipated by a master. How can he, whom God has destined to be the slave of the Brahmins, ever be released from his destiny by man." It was in pursuance of this idea that large masses of people, whose caste status was lower to the first four orders, were treated as being impure and

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22. T. Sankunny Menon, Dewan to G. A. Ballard, British Resident 9, November 1871, *Kērala Archives*, *News Letter*, Vol. i, March - June 1975, Nos. ii & iii, p. 9.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 10 - 11.

their emancipation was deemed to be an improper subject for serious consideration at the hands of God-fearing caste Hindus. The balanced functioning of the Hindu social order required a dead-weight of caste inferiors to be permanently put at this baseboard. Even though the system worked smoothly for centuries, its incidence on the life and fortunes of these lower classes was intensely harsh. The burden of appeasing the superior castes and the heaviness of the oppressive freight of feudal obligations, aggravated in progressive order when the caste groupings descended down to the extremity in merit, so much so that those at the bottom of the society were made to bear the entire burden of the upper layers. At that level, people had only obligations to perform and no rights to claim. Only on the absolute and unqualified inequality of castes the orthodox Hindu order could thrive. Untouchability and unapproachability were the main channels through which inequities flowed.

In order to under-score the pervasiveness of these social, evils, it will suffice if we note that even the life of the so called upper castes was regulated by some sort of untouchability taboos. Pollution was observed even between the different sub-castes within the Brahmin community. A Tamil Brahmin by touch caused pollution to a Nambudiri and a Nāyar, to the Brahmin.

Not only men, but inert objects belonging to the higher castes, also were subject to distance pollution. Temples houses, roads, tanks, wells, schools, markets, foodstuffs, courts, post offices and other public or private offices, all these came under the purview of prohibited objects for the approach or touch by outcastes. Those who polluted by approach or touch, temples, houses, tanks, or roads belonging to the *savarṇas* were awarded severe corporal punishments by the Brahmins and Nāyars. They were also compelled to pay compensation to meet the expenses of purificatory rites, refusal being met by civil action. Courts, in all such cases, were gravely partisan and favoured the *savarṇa* complainants. An interesting case occurred in Travancore in 1917. When a Kammāḷa (Carpenter) caused pollution to a *savarṇa's* tank,

the owner performed purificatory rite and asked him to pay the expenses, which the indigent carpenter was not in a position to do. Thereupon the *Savarṇa* sued him in a civil court and the complainant's claim was upheld. When appealed, the High Court of Travancore held "what is, or is not, natural consequence of a tortious act depends on the circumstances of each case. In a country like Travancore, where social and religious usages, which may be deemed superstitious and even irrational, when judged by Western standards, prevail, the function of courts is confined to respecting and giving effect to them, except when they are manifestly contrary to law or public policy or are subversive of morality. The defendant a Kammāḷa by caste, could easily have foreseen that his bathing in the temple tank would be deemed pollution by a plaintiff and such pollution could not be removed save by the performance of purificatory rites. The plaintiff has proved that he had to spend 258 fanams 8 cash for the purpose. I therefore agree with the Court below, in holding that the plaintiff is entitled to this amount as damages. The appeal is groundless and is accordingly dismissed with costs".[24]

How observance of unapproachability or *tiṇdal* had affected the life of the ordinary masses and how it had vitiated the whole fabric of government in Travancore and made it a grim farce is well brought out in the following document, a letter written by Mr. Ballard, Resident of Travancore, to the Government of Madras.

"From several sources as well as from observation on late tours of several months through the country, I have collected some information on the position of the lower castes in these States and I will endeavour to give a faithful idea thereof to the Government.

I think the substantial disabilities and oppressions to which the lowest castes in Travancore are still practically subjected may be summarised as follows.

24. *Travancore Law Journal* 1919, Vol. 9, pp. 298-301.

1. They are not permitted to use roads open to public of higher castes.
2. They are not permitted to enter or approach within a certain distance of many courts and public offices.
3. They are excluded from the government schools.
4. They are excluded from public service.

All the disabilities I need hardly observe, are based on one and the same primary idea, that of *tiṇḍal* or pollution to the higher caste, or holy place, or pure object, by the contact or approach within certain distance, of the lower caste. I proceed, however, to make a few remarks under each separate heading.

Interdiction to use of certain ways:

No one acquainted at all with the Malabār coast would be surprised to find that some streets, roads and paths which, elsewhere generally would be considered public ways in the usual sense of the term, are only "public" in a very limited sense here. Such ways are not and never have been public, in the sense of being open to all classes of the community. They are public to all good caste-men and generally to Christians and Muhammadans but certain lower classes are prohibited altogether from using them. Acquainted as I may to some extent claim to be with Malabār, it is not the principle itself, but the extent to which it is applied in these States that particularly strikes me.

The prohibited roads here are sometimes by no means bye-paths, but scetions of direct main lines that pass perhaps within the prescribed distance of some temple, shrine, high caste feeding establishment or dwelling house. As these were and often are still, the principal places in the rural districts, as the country tracks naturally led to them, and as the present roads are often the old lines of communication improved, the inconvenience suffered by the lower classes in not being able to use such roads is undoubtedly very considerable, indeed.

There are not a few bazaars and markets that Pulayars and such like castes cannot enter or approach.

Exclusion from public offices:

If the prohibitions are confined to preventing approach to persons, places or things in their religious, social or private capacity only, there would be little perhaps from an official point of view to say against them. But when the priniciple is carried farther, as I regret to say it is, and prohibits the entrance of large classes of the community to Courts of Justice, and public offices and their approach within certain distances to public officers in their official capacity, it becomes a very different and much graver general question, and is tantamount to a positive denial of justice in many individual cases. It is a fact that low caste-men generally cannot enter-sometimes cannot approach the Courts, Cutcherries, Registration offices etc. If the evidence of the low caste men has to be taken by a Judge or Magistrate and the witness cannot come to the Court, the Court must go to the witness. But it must not go too near him, and the frequent result is that the witness' evidence is taken by the Court or a Goomastāh deputed for the purpose, calling the questions to an intermediate peon, and the peon shouting them to the witness and repeating his replies to the presiding officer, the distance at which the witness is obliged to keep from that functionary being too great to allow of the questions and replies being distinctly audible or intelligible.

And, as low caste witnesses often give their evidence, so also low caste tax payers often pay their taxes, by go-betweens.

Now, however desirous the higher officers may be to keep justice and show mercy, it is simply impossible for them, in such circumstances to prevent oppression and corruption on the part of their underlings.

Exclusion from Sircār Schools:

To pass to another disability. The institution and conduct of numerous public schools reflects very great credit on the Sirkār's administration from several points of view. Yet here again appears the blot that a large portion of the community who contribute

their quota to the State revenues from which the schools are mainly supported are debarred from attending them.

I believe that, theoretically, in the High School at Trivandrum all castes would be said to be admitted. But I understand that Puliars, for instances, are interdicted from approaching within a considerable distance of the High School site at Trivandrum, and I do not think any application from a Pullian for admission has ever received.

I am informed that there are no Iḷavars. Shānars or fishermen (not professing Christianity) in the school. The rule that all Christians are one (*sic*) generally recognised in Trivandrum and a boy professing Christianity would probably be admitted without question, unless he was known to be a very recent convert from the prescribed classes or made himself obtrusively offensive to caste prejudice. A Tinnevelly or Madura lad of decent appearance though he might be a Śhānar or even have a suspicion of Pariāh about him, would pass, if at all discreet, as a Pāndy man,[25] but an Eḷavan or Chogan would hardly effect an entrance, and if he did so would probably find the position too uncomfortable to maintain long.

Throughout the country towns and rural districts the prejudices are much stronger and with few exceptions, even theoretically, a Tēyan, a Chogan or an Eḷavan would not be admitted to a government school, much less, one of the yet lower castes. It may be said to be a moot question whether if such an one professed Christianity, his caste is to be absolutely sunk or not. But I think with ordinary discretion on rhe part of the converts, the point would not generally be raised against them.

Exclusion from Public service :

The exclusion of low castemen as such from the Sirkār service is another substantial disability*...Here as in the other phases of the

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25. The term generally applied to all Eastern Coast men of the Southern Districts that were included in the Pāndyan Kingdom.

* According to the Census of 1901 no Iḷava was in Public Service and in 1913 Kumaran Āsān represented the matter to the Śri Mūlam Popular

question, the idea of '*thiṇḍal*' is at the root of the injustice, and besides, over and above the more purely religious question there is a strong popular feeling that if a low caste man was admitted to a position of authority, high castemen would on occasion have to stand before him—a situation very repugnant to high caste feeling".[26]

Of all the disabilities, the one related to the admission of lower caste children to public schools was the most pernicious one, that led to the stagnation of the intellectual life of these communities, forcing them to remain socially and economically backward. The pressure exerted by the British Government as well as persistent efforts on the part of social reformers and organizations in the early decade of the present century produced cognizable improvement in the situation. But the Government's ameliorative measures, half-hearted though they were, to concede the educational rights of the non-caste Hindus, did not have the desired effect, because their show of liberalise was made meaningless by the Government's silent acquiescence to the acts of sabotage by the caste Hindu officers of the State. In spite of several proclamations of the rulers declaring that "all classes without distinction of caste or creed, may have access to public institutions", the lower classes did not get a fair deal at the hands of these prejudiced officers. As Kumaran Āsān, the poet legislator complained on the floor of the popular Assembly in 1914 "The lower subordinates of the Education Department, such as the Headmasters and Teachers, were not loyally following the liberal policy enunciated by the Government and implicitly carrying out their orders. The orders declaring certain schools open to the community (Iḷava) three years ago had become rather cold by lapse of time. The reason generally urged, with a view to shut out the Ēzhavas was, want of accommodation in the schools". He cited cases "in which headmasters went to the length of temporarily putting some road-coolies on the rolls to complete

Assembly. Only after 1917 they were given employment in certain services.

26. *Proceedings of the Madras Government*,-Political Department, 23, April 1870.

the sanctioned strength and gradually replacing them by caste Hindu boys. They also sometimes colluded with the people and the higher educational authorities and shifted the schools from non-objectionable localities to inconvenient ones".[27]

In order to perpetuate caste and untouchability in the field of education, the authorities tried to prevent the mixing up of *savarṇa* and *avarṇa* pupils by establishing separate caste schools in certain areas for the benefit of lower castes. But the Government of Madras deprecated such policy of establishing separate caste schools as "retrogressive tending to sanction and ratify the righteousness of caste feelings". When Ilava Members of the Popular Assembly clamoured for governmental action in throwing open, all the girls' schools for their children also, the Government refused to that immediately and declared that it was against the recognized customs of the land and that "it was impossible to have an Ezhava girl learning in the same school with a Nāir or a Brahmin girl".[28] This was the nature of the educational opportunities offered to the outcastes, just fourteen years before the Vaikkam Satyagraha.

Employment opportunities also were denied to them in the state service because of unapproachability and their low station in life. The Government made clear in 1891 that the social position of the untouchables "is such that they can hardly be eligible for public offices where a certain amount of respect is expected to be commanded in a state were Hindus are more conservative and superstitious than their brethern in Malabār".[29] The same policy was continued for a long time until at last the Government were forced to concede the right of employment in the public offices in spite of caste inferiority of these lower sections of the society. Even in 1913 the Dewān had to defend the government's reluctance to employ these people in certain departments on account of their low caste. He said, "in the

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27. T. K. Ravindran, *Āsān and Social Revolution in Kerala.* pp. 18 - 19.
28. *Proceedings of the Sri Mūlam Popular Assembly.* 1910. p. 39.
29. *Government Endorsement to the Malayāli Memorial,* No. 1899. M. 888, *English Records,* Government Secretariat, Trivandrum.

police Department if too many Ezhavas are taken, the work may be obstructed as they could not enter all places freely, such as temples, Brahmin houses and the like."[30]

Again, on account of untouchability and unapproachability caste Hindu temples and Sirkār temples were closed to all non-caste Hindus for worship. Till 1836, none of them had ever seen the inside of a single savarṇa temple and the idol, the object of their worshipful prayer. These temples had trees or "flag-stones to mark the spot upto which members or exterior castes were allowed to proceed. Worshippers of these categories would place their cash offerings at the prescribed spot and withdraw themselves to allow the temple servants to take away the money and wait for the *prasādams* (that is, the sanctified offerings such as flowers, food, sandal-paste etc.)"[31].

They had no right to walk along the approach roads leading to the temple which were open to the Muslims and Christians who were free to go up to the outer gateways and even to sit on the temple walls. Devout non-caste Hindu worshippers could watch from their far-off posts ; but the unclean Muslim and Chiristian beggars were roaming about the outer walls of the temple or squatting at the gate ways. They had to satisfy themselves with prayer to the temple deity by seeing only the metallic dome of the temple. The orthodox quoted *Vaikhānasa Āgama* which enjoins that "*Pratilomajās* and *Antyajās* should see the *stūpi* (the metallic dome) at the top of the roof of the shrine and worship". That means the polluting castes were prohibited from entering the outer *prakāras* of the temple for worship.

Physical cleanliness, intellectual attainments, economic means, or high station in life was no merit on the part of an un-touchable to qualify him to enter these prohibited areas near the temple. It was common in those days that a *savarṇa* cook of an *avarṇa* gentleman could become a *Pujāri* (priest) in the temple. A brahmin cook of an Illava judge got appointment as a temple

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30. *Proceedings of the Sri Mūlam Popular Assembly,* 1913, p. 163.
31. A. Aiyappan, *Social Revolution in a Kēraḷa Village,* p. 135.

priest on the latter's recommendation; but the judge himself was not allowed to cross temple roads or go near the temple gopuram. The following notice of an eye-witness written in 1924 will bring out the appalling nature of the social injustice meted out to these classes.

"I saw a number of poor Christian boys crowding at one of the gates of the Vaikom temple on the occasion of a grand prathal feasting, eagerly waiting for the refuse leaves that are thrown out. They were uncleanly enough. There was a good collection of Nambudiries who had come for the Yōgakshēma Sabha, besides a large number of other Brahmins of the locality and from the neighbouring Taluqs. It interested me in watching the effect that the proximity of these Christian boys would produce on the minds of these Brahmins and the several Brahmin ladies that passed to and fro. But, to my surprise, not one of them appeared to be polluted. Their conduct did not show that the temple or the deity was polluted either. Now, along with this, consider the disability of Mr. C, O. Madhavan, B.A., B.L., the District Munsiff at Vykom, because he as the misfortune to belong to the Hindu Ezhava community. He is not accorded the privilege which is enjoyed by the Christian boys, waiting for the refuse leaves of the temple. Mr. Madhavan cannot go to his Court along the road adjoining the temple wall, but he had to choose a more circuitous path. He is a young Hindu Officer who, in point of the bodily cleanliness can compare favourably with any caste Hindu and yet has not the privilege enjoyed by his servant Mathai or Ahammadu. The body of a Pulaya or a Parish boy when touched by the hand of a Christian Missionary or a Mahammadan Moulvi at once becomes sacred and refined from pollution, but he remains a polluted being so long as he remains a Hindu, Can the blindness of Hindu orthodoxy and the absurdity or pollution reach worse limits? Can Hindus inflict a more cruel penalty on their own religion.[32]

The exterior castes were handicapped because they had no remedy in law for their civic torments; courts recognised and

32. Letter by K. Sivathanu Pillai, in *Daily News*, Trivandrum, 24, April, 1924.

enforced the customary law which were patently against their fundamental rights. The highest appellate tribunal of India the Privy Council, accepted this rule and made it a maxim, " under the Hindu system of law, clear proof of usage will out-weigh the written text of the law". Approach to or entry into temples by outcastes was prohibited by custom. This was interpreted as defilement and, criminal law protected places of worship from such act by making it an offence under the Penal Code. The Travancore High Court scrupulously followed the maxim laid down by the Privy Council and included ceremonial pollutions also in the offence of defilement.

The total effect of all these was to relegate the non-caste Hindus of Travancore to the position of drawers of waters and hewers of wood to their caste superiors and the caste government. The only plea on which they were denied their primordial rights was based on custom; but the most orthodox of Smriti writers, Manu, was specific on the point that custom should be changed according to the conditions of time. He said when a *Dharma* becomes obnoxious to society, it should be scrapped; "*parityajeth...dharmañja pyasubhodarkam loka vikrustamēva ca.*"

But the Government of Travancore believed that no such change should be admitted in the *sāstric* rules and age-old customs should be preserved in their pristine purity. *Āçārams*, however obnoxious they may be, have to be punctiliously observed in their purity and rigidity. They openly expressed their fear that, laxity in this matter would break the social structure and untoward consequences would follow. The government, consequently, acted as the trustees of the pride and honour of the *savarṇas*. As Subba Aiyar, the Law Member of the Legislative Council of Travancore, stated, "The government, in addition to their responsibilities as government, have their responsibilities as trustees. They are bound to administer the Dāvaswoms in accordance with past usage and custom. The Government do not wish that their action should in any way be characterised as a betrayal of trust."[33]

33. *Travancore Legislative Council Proceedings*, 5, February, 1925, Vol. 6, pp. 608 - 9.

The Government accordingly identified the privileges of superior caste-men with the laws of the land and refused to effect any innovation in the existing order that pressed hard upon the self-respect and honour of the inferior caste-men. The privileges of the *savarṇas* were the disabilities of the *avarṇas*, and that arrangement, the Government wanted to prepetuate, when they denied the right of the lower castes to walk along the roads around the Vaikkam temple. The majority of the Hindu population of Travancore was untouchable. The Government was eager to protect only the minority right, leaving the majority to decay in the rut of feudal obligations. The Law Member made it clear when he said that the Government is not to consider it their duty to protect the majority rights. "It is a question of fact" he maintained, "to be decided whether it is a right of the majority. The Government cannot play the role of a social reformer and change religious beliefs by executive orders."[34]

The fundamental thing that the Travancore government did not understand was that they were asked to change not the religious beliefs, but only the religious practices which degenerated into social evils and contravented the social, religious and legal rights of majority of Hindu religionists. This they realised in 1936 when the Temple Entry Proclamation put an end to all the special rights of the caste Hindus. The myth of immutability of *āchārams*, so well defended by Subba Aiyar, was laid bare by Mahārāja Sri Cithira Tirunāḷ through his historic proclamation of 12th November 1936 which said "knowing that in its (Hinduism) practice, it has, throughout the centuries, adapted itself to the needs of changing times, solicitous that none of our Hindu subjects should, by reason of birth or caste, or community, be denied the consolation and solace of the Hindu faith, we have decided and hereby declare, ordain and command, that there should henceforth be no restriction placed on any Hindu by birth or religion on entering or worshipping at the temples controlled by us and our Government."[35] No greater revolutionary social

34. *Ibid.*, p. 610.

35. *Souvenir of Temple Entry Proclamation Memorial*, p. 1.

reform can we come across in recent history than this one by the ruler of Travancore. He has proved that executive action is the surest means of producing social and religious changes in India.

Thus the effect of keeping the majority of the Hindu population in the country in an abject condition of positive servitude, denying it the elementary rights that alone could help a man to realise his best self, was to give a very low status to the Hindu religion itself. Untouchability and unapproachability were applicable only in the case of non-caste Hindus. They suffered these disabilities solely because they remained within the fold of Hinduism. The moment they left it and embraced Islam or Christianity, their stigma was removed and they, in their new religious status, were free to move along the same roads which were closed for them, when they continued to commit the sin of practicing the Hindu faith.

One of the strongest supporters of the Government's uncompromising attitude towards *avarṇas*, Rao Bahadur K. A. Krishna Aiyaṅgār, the Deputy President of the Travancore Legislative Council admitted on the floor of the Council, that "there are some views of the conservative Hindu, the memory of which upsets me and I have to low my head in shame and, I propose to deal with one of them. So long as a man worships the Gods in the Hindu pantheon, so long as he calls himself Mādhavan Govindan, Paramēśwaran, Kumaran, we tell him "please keep out, because you are not in the first four castes". He changes his name into Pereira or Abdul Latif–we shake hands with him! That is the question the memory of which, not now, sir, but ever since I began to bestow any thought upon these social questions, made me feel so sad and which has at times, made it difficult for me to reconcile my ideas of reverènt devotion to the founders of this great religion. The monotheism of Sañkara, its inspiring daring message is a trumpet call to all humanity to recognise their essential unity. It is the land of Sañkarāchārya in which we are living. The revered Rāmānuja sent out a message exactly like that. Other great reformers have appeared in this holy land—Dayānanda Saraśwathi, Rām Mohan Roy, Rāmakrishna Parama-

hamsa—men of out-standing personality. Leaving apart beings whom we worship as *avatārs*, leaving apart Lords of Compassion, like Christ, Buddha, Sri Krishna, Rāmachandra—looking at the ideals laid down for the guidance of the Hindu community the essential unity of man "I am Ēswara", that message that Saṅkara gave to the world has not been altogether forgotten by India. We are born in the land of his birth, that idea occasionally rushes through our veins. A friend, who worships the God that I worship, who gives his children the name that I gave my children, cannot exercise the rights of passage which we accord to the followers of other religions—is it not weakening of the Hindu ranks, especially in these progressive days of democratic Government, when loaves of office and rights of representation are sought to be determined not necessarily by merit or by efficiency alone, but by the census figures? It is a very low view ... what perhaps upsets me more than any thing else is, way this right that we accord to non-Hindus we deny to non-caste Hindus."[36]

So the conclusion is forced upon that Travaṅcore Government was the worst enemy of Hindu faith by driving out its loyal followers to take shelter in the palmy folds of other faiths. Hinduism lost all its meaning for the lower caste groups because their continuance in that religion only helped them forget their natural rights; they wore it as a worthless badge only to be sniggered at by their non-Hindu brethren. The irony is, that by their fanatical adherence to the worn-out customs, the Government of Travaṅcore made Hinduism inferior to all other known religions of the world. In fact records speak of the Travaṅcore Sirkār, having permitted whole villages in South Travaṅcore inhabited by low caste Hindus to be converted to Christianity. Mackenzie noted "The Salvation Army, which was introduced into India in 1882 by Commissioner Tucker, came to Travaṅcore in 1889. Three years later under the teaching of some of its officers, a considerable number of people in the low caste villages of Agastheeśwaram and Tōvala taluqs professesd Christianity and urged the Army to

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36. *Travancore Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1925, Vol. 6, pp. 758-9.

establish schools and permanently station officers in their midst, offering for this purpose in some instances the buildings and ground hitherto used for their Hindu worship. During the year 1892 the work rapidly spread and in some instances whole villages joined the army *en masse*. In 1894 large extensions were made in the Kalkulam and Kulasēkharam districts and three years later, an entirely new work was opened amongst the Puliyars of North Travañcore, resulting in considerable accessions being received from amongst this down-trodden community in the neighbourhood of Mavēlikkara and Chaṅganachēri".[37]

It may ratiocinated from all these that a major cause for swelling the ranks of Islam and Christianity in Kēraḷa was the inhuman cruelty practiced on the lower caste-men by their own caste-Hindu brethren and the caste governments through untouchability and unapproachability. From the oppression of caste regulations, these unfortunate men found a haven in other religious faiths which promised brotherhood and equality.

37. G. T. Mackenzie, ***Christianity in Travancore***, p. 54.

FOLK ART FORMS OF TAMIL NĀḌU

BY

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Village Culture:

Millions of village folk too have abundant sense of art and innate sense of culture. In fact, more than the so-called civilised people, the innocent rustic souls have purer sense of art, unpolluted and uncorrupted. The great arts fostered and nurtured by the village folks, are as pure as the smile of the innocent child. The child's smile is boundless, unfettered and unaffected by any whims and fancies. One cannot fail to perceive the Divine Grace of fineness and freshness in the child's smile.

Yes, the first effulgence of the fountain of peace is in the maiden blossom of the infant's smile. It has the mighty power to remove confusion and create calmness, peace and tranquility—which even thousands of Universities cannot infuse.

It is this eternal trust that' the immortal Poet Bharathi proclaims while portraying Lord Krishṇa as a child:

> "May the wild evil in me be washed away
> by the divine grace of your smile's sway!"

It is this divine power of the child's smile, ingrained in the rustic arts of beauty that confers the boon of tranquility and peace to the village folk. And their arts have come to be popularly known as Folk Arts.

Twin Foundations:

In the days of yore, thousands of years back, there were no established theatres — no booming radios with blowing loud-speakers; no cheap films that smash the human mind—no sexy dances to quake the earth — no concert platforms to deaften the ear-drums — no night clubs or evening Sabhas to thrash their

political problems in the Concert Halls without caring for the singing artiste, however great genius he may be; and no cheap artistes degrading themselves by crow-catching for petty chances. But in those remote hamlets there were genuine souls to till and make the soil rich. Truth and tranquility served as the twin foundations of their daily life.

Strength of nerves — humility of mind — dignity of labour — passion for unity — magnanimity in help — pride of their Nationality — chivalry at heart — kindness in thoughts — perceiving art and beauty in everything — such are the noble qualities of the village folk, who fostered, developed and enjoyed through successive generations their Great Arts which we all hear, see and enjoy.

Even to this day, we are able to witness, in their pristine glory ancient folk-arts traditionally fostered by the peasant people. We hear and enjoy their child-like simple tunes and scintillating movements of dance varities.

Banyan Tree:

The new form is developed on the foundations of the old. Thousands of banyan trees have sprung only from the tiny first seed of the first tree. Again, from the same old seed sprouts the shoots of the new tree. Hence there is nothing old or new in arts. If sowing the seeds and reaping the harvest are discarded as outmoded, crops cannot grow. As the grand old lady has new great-grand-children, we get many a modern form from the ancient art form especially from the rural folk-styles.

If the mother and father are discarded as outmoded, no fresh lives can ever spring up.

If the swaras and Tālas of music are discarded as outmoded, how can an artiste sing or dance?

Without our Musical Tradition, no good music can flower;
Sans our Dance heritage, no dance can flourish for ever;
No folk dramas means no good dramas can ever prosper;
No child can ever grow, sans love of its own mother—

No tree without roots, no roots without water,
No water without rains, no rains without the ocean.
Life springs from people's heart to nurture every creative art.

Yes, — if our traditional arts and traits are given up, no new arts can every survive. Even now, we are able to get a glimpse of the pristine glory of the traditional art-forms only through the arts among our village folk.

The Music of Nature:

The humming strains of the springs spread sweet music amidst the natural surroundings of the village, untainted by any blemish. The people who enjoy this lively music grow up to the stature of natural artistes. The following lines of Poet Bharathi will give us a picture of this great transformation and subtle creation of natural melody:—

"In the wind amidst trees, in tunes amidst woods,
In the song of gushing river and rushing falls,
In the sound of roaring waves of vast ocean,
In the sweet-honeyed drops of soul-stirring strains
From love-torn hearts of flower-like maidens,
In the song of men watering the fields,
In the voice of women thrashing the grains,
And beating them with bashful tunes,
In the lilting music of peasant maidens,
In the sweet songs of dancing damsels,
Sung to the rhythm of their clapping hands—
In the music of Veena and enchanting Flute,
And of innumerous instruments of wind and string,
That fills the air, sea, land and the woods,
Lo! Poor ego of mine had lost its heat.

This is the pen picture about the natural marvel of music portrayed by our Great Poet, Mahākavi Bharathiar.

These artistes are not mere students of art, as the star-dom artistes of the urban areas—but are talented experts in their espective traditional arts.

The village folk have not made any differentiation or classification between their arts and avocation, as the urban people have done. The reason is, their agricultural avocation knows on rest. Time is precious for them. Only if they toil in the land without wasting even a day, the crops will grow and they can reap a rich harvest to feed the thousands of urban population.

From the time of sowing the seeds till storing the grains in the granary, the peasant folk will not be able to move out from their fields. When the rice boils at the oven, the mother cannot stir out of the house. Similarly after sowing the seeds, the peasants cannot attend to anything else till the harvest. They cannot afford to take rest from this life-giving avocation. Hence the peasants have inter-woven their arts with their day-to-day work.

Undoubtedly the ecstasy of the Poet's heart portrayed in the above poem kindles every heart to patronise these living arts of the people without any distinction of high or low.

Now let us go through an example of a folk song sung in the natural background of an ideal southern village :—

ஆத்து வெள்ளம் நாளைவரத் தோத்தங் காணுதே
மலையாள மின்னல் இடிமின்னல் ஈடி மின்னுதே
நேத்தும் இன்றும் கொம்புசுத்திக் காத்தடிக்குதே—நல்ல
நீர்ப்படும் சொறித் தவளை கூப்பிடுதே.

" There are signs of the river flooding tomorrow,
The lightning shines from behind mountain's row
Today and yesterday did the whirlwinds blow
The frogs from water-bed quack in pitch high-brow!

This is the line from the famous 'Mukkūḍal Paḷḷu'. Let us see another song sung by another poet adopting the folk form. The song is in praise of River Cāuvēry :—

சத்தியத்தைப் போல எங்கள் காவேரி
இத்தரையைக் காவல் செய்யும் காவேரி
புத்தம்புதுப் பொன்னியம்மா காவேரி—உன்
சித்திரமே சிங்காரப் பூஞ்சோலை

கம்பனுக்குக் கவி தருவாள் காவேரி—எம்
கண்களுக்கு ஒளி தருவாள் காவேரி
மேலைமலைக் காற்றரசன் பூசை செய்வான்—காவேரிக்கு
மேகராஜன் ஓடிவந்து குடை பிடிப்பான்
கவிராஜன் நூலாடை போர்த்திடுவார்—காவேரியைக்
கடலரசன் கைகூப்பிக் கும்பிடுவான்
கோயில் குளம் கோட்டைவாசல் கொத்தளங்கள்—காவேரி
தாயின் அருள்தந்த பெரும் சீதனமாம்!
ஆயகலை நடனங்கள் அத்தனையும்
நீயளிக்கும் நிதியாகும் காவேரி!
ஆடிமாதம் ஓடிநாங்க நாத்து நட
தேடி வந்து காத்தருளும் தேவியம்மா!
ஏரிகுளம் எல்லாம் என் கருணை பெற—காவேரியே
வாரி வாரி பாரி போல் தாராய் நீ!

[சத்தியத்தைப் போல எங்கள் காவேரி
இத்தரையைக் காவல் செய்யும் காவேரி]

"Like the Eternal Truth, our Cāuvēry,
Protects this land, our Cāuvēry:
Ever fresh in golden form, our Cāuvēry,
Beautiful, as flower-garden; ,and your beauty
Kindles ebbing fervour in the Poet's heart
And confers Light of vision to our eyes!
The King of Westerly Winds worships thy feet,
The King of Clouds adorns as canopy to your Crown,
The King of Poets honours Three with shawl of poems
The King of Oceans adore Thee with folded hands!
Temple, tank, castle and the armoury
Are the dowry given by our mother Cāuvēry!
The graceful arts of Music and Dance
Are the boons conferred by mother Cāuvēry!
In Ādi we plant tender crops in the field
With Divine grace you nurture them, as shield;
The Lakes and Tanks, with mercy, Cāuvēry!
You flood with your munificence, as Great Pearl!

Soul of India:

We are taught that the Soul of India dwells only in the villages. It is only the great army of our peasant-folk that keeps the soul-flame burning. They are the people who provide food to the urban population and save them. On the day of harvest, the peasants throughout the country are filled with happiness and joy. Peace and plenty prevail everywhere. On this happy occasion, the peasant folks witness and enjoy the fruits of their year-long hard labour. Prosperity of the world depends on the prosperity of agriculture; for agriculture is the Culture of all Cultures. As a devotee worships the Lord alongside his work, the villagers take to entertainment as part of their daily agricultural labour.

Folk Music:

Music springs side by side with the daily work of the peasants. Tunes spring even while the tillers toil at the fields. Flow of music coincides with the sowing of seeds. The breezy wind brings the sweet songs of the shepherd's lute and lures thousands of cattle grazing in the land. The vast earth is their stage. The blue sky is its decorated roof. The sun, moon and the shining starts provide the spot-lights for this fine cosmic stage. The boundless woods, high mountains and long rivers serve as Nature's back-drops.

Music at the plough; Music at the fields; Music in the garden; Music at the canal and over the bund; Music while they watch the crop; Music while harvesting the produce; Music while thrashing the grains; thus, the whole daily life of the peasants reverberates with music.

Folk Dance:

After the harvest, the festivals begin. The spontaneous music that enlivens the peasants work till January yields place to dance in devotion to the Divine in the months of March and April. The urge of music that surged alongside their work till the harvest now flowers into ecastatic dance, in devotional esctasy. Busy activity and constant work are in the very blood of the peasants. Hence

at the culmination of their dedicated toil at the plough, they canalise their arts towards devotion to the Almighty.

Mañji Viraṭṭu:

In the months which form the spring season (from January to April) the village youth celebrates festivals of valour like 'Mañji Viraṭṭu'. They commence with the play of drums. Brave youths vie with one another in taming turbulent bulls as a display of their valour.

Kōlāṭṭam:

Ovens with 'Poṅgal' brighten the temples. Young maidens dance to the rhythm of hand-claps. They play also 'Kōlāṭṭam' in which, instead of clapping their hands, they use short painted sticks to indicate the rhythm, beating them together in a scissor—like fashion. Though the music and dance may appear simple, their execution is found to be refined and graceful, with many attractive variations in tune, foot-work, pose and movement. Through variegated gaits and movements they dance to the tune of lilting music; and wonderful rhythmic patterns are woven and unwoven.

Kāvaḍi Dance:

After Kōlāṭṭam, the middle-aged folk will take 'Kāvaḍi' as offering to the Lord Muruga, the Lord of Kuriñji land (Lily region). The Kāvaḍi is a well-known ancient form of folk-dance. The Kāvaḍi is swung round to the tune of music with dance movements. The dance is performed according to the variety of special tunes called 'Kāvaḍi Chindu'. The orchestra in Naiyāṇdi Mēḷam consist of Nādaswaram, Thavil, Pambai and Thamukku. Thousands of Kāvaḍis form groups and commence their dance to the rhythm of music which reverberates the whole atmosphere. These songs of ecstasy have endless forms and innumerable variations. The Kāvaḍi style songs are most attractive with captivating tunes and countless rhythms.

Karagam Dance:

The village folk also resort to 'Karagam' dance during their worship of Divine Mother (Goddess). The 'Karagam' dance is

a tireless feast for the eyes and its music abounds with divine ecstasy. The songs are sung in praise of the 'Divine Mother' (Goddess of rains—Māriamman) entreating her for mercy, for rains, for bestowing prosperity and for warding off epidemics and evils.

Dummy Horse dance:

During Car festivals, the Dummy Horse Dance is a common sight. In the Dummy Horse Dance or Puravi Āṭṭam, the dummy horse is lavishly decorated to resemble a well-bred palace-horse or war horse. In this, the Dancer appears as if he is riding on the horse and he dances to the tune of orchestral music.

Oyil Āṭṭam:

We sometimes come across another type of dance called 'Oyil Āṭṭam'. Oyil Aṭṭam is a major folk dance of men and the village people take keen interest in it. Normally, the group consists of 15 to 20 men including the teacher and the accompanists on harmonium, mridaṅgam and cymbal. This dance also is performed during village temple festivals. The dancers wear gaudy coloured trousers, matched with a suitable shirt, a shoulder scarf, a towel, ankle bells and a staff similar to the one carried by military officers. One man begins the song and it is responded to in chorus by rest of the group.

Śilambāṭṭam:

The youth resorts sometimes to 'Śilambāṭṭam' also. This is a rare feat performed with rhythmic movements and the performers swing the sticks with dexterity of hands and at a very high speed at the climax.

Lāvaṇi:

'Lāvaṇi' is a type of folk song wherein a controversial theme is taken for argument by two sides of singers. Generally 'Burning of Manmatha' (conquering the Fairy of Love—Cupid) forms the theme. One side asserts that Manmatha was burnt and the other asserts that he was not. Arguments are advanced and replied to in songs-style and the audience enjoy, for hours together, this endless treat of entertainment.

Villuppāṭṭu :

'Villuppāṭṭu' is another type of folk music sung by 6 to 8 singers using a long bow-like instrument with jingling bells attached to the thick string of the bow. The mouth of a mud pot is beaten gently on its leather piece and an Uḍukku is also used. The themes centre round the meritorious deeds of Gods and Goddesses, heroes and heroines. Kaṭṭa Bomman and Suḍalai Māḍan are some of the favourite themes of this folk music. The leader of the group narrates the story, stage by stage, in music and the rest of the group will punctuate it by refrains. The Villuppāṭṭu is performed often throughout the night, as it keeps the thousands of audience spell-bound.

Bommalāṭṭam :

'Bommalāṭṭam' or puppetry is also performed at the village festivals. In the Bommalāṭṭam, the characters of a drama are portrayed by decorated little dolls and their movements are manipulated by black strings held by experienced craftsmen standing behind a short screen. Scenes from Purānic dramas like Harischandra and Rukmāṅgada are generally depicted. The music is not only of a high order, approaching the classical mode but also very appealing. The acting of the dolls appears almost human and they are made to dance Bharathanāṭyam items too like Alārippu, Jathiswaram and Thillāna. The puppets are sizeable and the music is refined.

"Therukoothu" (Folk Play) :

The Village folk have their own rich dramatic talents. During village festivals, street folk-plays called "Therukoothu" are performed. The artistes do not need mike, loud-speaker or playback voice to aid them. The characters themselves sing and their voice will be heard to a radius of about a mile. With their powerful voice, they sing to a mammoth audience with clear intonation of words, attuned to the basic *sruti.*, The plays are held throughout the night, sometimes even upto the day-dawn. They have traditional training to portay exactly their emotions in every movement of their limbs and every phase of their acting.

Actors wear antique and eerie costumes. With an improvised stage and an open-air auditorium, these folk plays used to be expounded in connection with religious and temple festivals.

" Prahlāda ", " Drowpathi Vasthrāpaharan ", " Keechaka Vadam ", " Karṇa Mōksham ", " Thiruneelakaṇṭa Nayanār " are some of the themes presented as folk-plays. This form of traditional dramatic art is prevalent in the various districts of Tamil Nāḍu like Tāñjāvur, Tiruchy, Madurai, Rāmanāthapuram, Tirunelvēli, Salem, North Ārcot etc.

Purisai Naṭesa Thambiran's troupe :

The Therukoothu troupe of Thiru Naṭesa Thambiran of Purisai village is North Ārcot district is one of the famous troupes that has won laurels throughout the neighbouring districts. This troupe was founded by the late Raghava Thambiran, paternal uncle of Natesa Thambiran and is actively functioning for over 30 years. Thiru Natesa Thambiran has been honoured with the National Award by the Central Sangeet Nāṭak Akademi and the " Kalaimāmaṇi " award by the Tamil Nāḍu Eyal Iśai Nāṭaka Manṛam, in appreciation of his outstanding contribution to the Folk Play Art. Three other members of this troupe Messrs. Kannan Thambiran, V. Raju Thambiran and Thangavelu are also recipients of the " Kalaimāmaṇi " Awards. The troupe consists of several other eminent artistes.

The troupe has the advantage of the guidance by the famous Tamil Scholar, Purisai Thiru Murugesa Mudaliar, who is an acknowledged authority and exponent of Villiputhurār's Bhāratham in Tamiḷ, and several other works of Tamiḷ Literature.

The songs of the Therukoothu Plays staged by this troupe as well as the dialogues, are traditional, appealing and vibrant. The plays are performed mostly during temple festivals and are witnessed by lakhs of people. The play usually begins after 9 P.M. and goes on well up to the dawn. The costumes and make-up are well-designed to suit the different characters. The delivery of the dialogues is highly emotional and the audience respond with equal emotion and approbation.

Last year, the troupe staged "Drowpathi Vasthrāpaharanam" at Purisai Village in the presence of the Chairman, Secretary and members of the Tamiḷ Nāḍu Eyal Iśai Nāṭaka Maṇṟam who paid a special visit to the village to witness the show. This year, the troupe staged the Therukoothu play "Siruthoṇḍa Nāyanār" at Purisai village on a similar occasion, which coincided with the Maṇḍalābhishēkam of Purisai temple. Several eminent personalities and scholars also witnessed the plays which conformed to the highest traditions of the Folk Play Art and were well enjoyed by the audience.

Conclusion :

The greatness of the folk arts of Tamiḷ Nāḍu are as boundless as the arts themselves. All arts patronised by the urban people can trace their origin to the traditional folk arts of this land. They reflect the cream of the village tradition. It is the moral duty of every of us to help to preserve and promote this Divine Form of the peoples' Art which really deserves all the help and encouragement from our Democratic Welfare State which believes in rural reconstruction.

GAṆAPATI-VINĀYAKA IN THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

BY

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Gaṇapati–Vināyaka is one of the most popular and the powerful deities of the Hindu Pantheon. The elephant-faced God Ganēsa occupies an important position in the realm of Indian culture and thus exercised a dominating influence on the Indian mind. He is worshipped as Biddhidāta (Bestower of wealth), Siddhidāta (Bestower of Success) and Buddhidāta (God of Wisdom and the Lord of learning). Gaṇapati–Vināyaka is also propitiated as Vighnēsa (lord of obstacles) because he is strong enough to create obstacles and is also quite capable to avert all sorts of troubles and impediments. And it is perhaps because of this reason that he is invoked before the commencement of any and every undertaking whether religious, social or literary and also adored before starting any commercial enterprise. Gaṇapati-Vināyaka can be rightly said to be the national God of India because he is the only God whose worship is not confined alone to the Gāṇapatyas (the exclusive worshippers of Gaṇapati) but he is equally adored by all sorts of religious (followers of 'Śaivism, Viṣnuism, Saktism, Buddhism and Jainism etc.) and non-religious people of India. So, Gaṇapati–Vināyaka has been safeguarding our ancient Republican Traditions (Gaṇatantric-Traditions) since very hoary past. The indelible influence of Gaṇapati can be noticed in the daily life of every Indian, in all parts of India, irrespective of any religion, class or sect.

Some scholars, especially those influenced by the Western mode of thinking, opine that Gaṇapati and his worship originated quite late and they ascribe its rise to Gupta–era. But this view seems not only hopeless but baseless too and does not hold water, as the thinkers of this school are prey to the Western way of

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evaluating the things and they are addicted to look at the Indian culture with the Westerner's spectacles. Gaṇapati has been worshipped in India and outside India since very hoary past and even the Rigvēdic people were quite conversant with Gaṇēsa-worship,[1] though with a different form of worship. A God may be known by different names in different periods and in different countries and no wonder that certain aspects of some Gods undergo unrecognisable transformation. Secondly, a God has various names and forms at the same time. Even the non-availability of icons and the absence of sculptural evidences of some deity does not make much difference, because icon worship is not the only mode of worship and the origin of Image worship is quite late to which the followers of Jainism have contributed a lot.

The evidences of Gaṇapati-worship are abundantly available in the great epic—the Mahābhārata.

The Mahābhārata, the second epic of the Indian classical literature, is also known as the fifth Vēda. "Mahābharata" means the great description of the great battle of the Indian people. The plot of this great epic is the description of the famous battle fought between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas the—good and the evil forces and the good forces ultimately came out to be victorious. The Mahābhārata, which contains 8800 verses (slokas), is said to be the largest and the greatest poem in the world of poetry.

The evidences of worship of Gaṇapati Vināyaka can be easily traced in the Mahābhārata which speak about Gaṇapati-Vinayaka and his worship, though with different tones.

The Ādiparva of the Mahābhārata not only indicates about the Gaṇēsa-worship but it also throws adequate light about one of his main aspects, i.e. "God of Wisdom and the lord of learning (reading and writing)", as it regards him as the writer of the Mahābhārata. For the detailed description of this fact we can have the close examination of this parva of the great epic.

1. (a) Rigvēda, 2/23/1, (b) Ibid., 10/112/a, (c) Taittrīya Āraṇyaka, 10/1.

Ādiparva, the first chapter of the Mahābhārata, informs us that after completing the composition of his great poem—the Mahābhārata, Krishṇa-Dvaipāyaṇa-Vyāsa started brooding over the fact that how it could be preached for the welfare of the people.

Knowing this mental state of Vyāsa dēva, Brahma—the creator of the universe appeared before him. Overjoyed by the appearance of Brahma, Vyāsa provided him a seat (Āsana) and very humbly expressed his anxiety over the hard task of writing the longest poem which he had composed in his imagination. Revealing the significance of this great poem, the poet tells Brahma, that in this epic the quintessence of the most secret mysteries of the Vēdas is contained and the gist of the Vēdaṅgas and the Upaniṣads are also described vividly. Not only this but many useful things,[2] are also mentioned in this poem. After explaining the importance of this poem he expressed his worry that there was no one on earth, who could write it.[3] Brahma praised the epic composed by Vyāsa and advised him to meditate over Gaṇapati to seek his grace and to utilize his services for giving written shape to his great epic.

Just after the disappearance of Brahmāji, in accordance to the advice of Brahma, Satyavatinandana Vyāsa meditated over Gaṇapati who appeared before him as soon as he was remembered. Maharṣi Vyāsa welcomed him with great love and respect and provided him a seat (āsana) and with due veneration Vyāsa requested him to become the writer of his epic. Vyāsa also told that he himself would go on dictating the great epic which he had composed in his mind.[4] Listening this Gaṇēsa acceded to the request of Vyāsa on condition that the flow of his pen should not be impeded by delay.[5] Vyāsa also requested him not to write even a single word without understanding the context properly.

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2 Mahābhārata, Ādiparva, 1/61-62, 70.

3. Ibid., 1/74.

4. Mahābhārata, Ādiparva, 1/77.

5. Ibid., 1/78.

Gaṇapati, the virtuous one, consented to be the writer of the great epic by uttering 'aum' and he wrote this great and the longest poem of the world with a superhuman rapidity and made it available in book-form for the welfare of mankind.

The Ādiparva of Mahābhārata while describing him as the writer of the epic, makes mention of the following names of the elephant-faced, god, i.e. Gajāṇana, Ganēsāna, Ganēśa, Vighnēśa, Hēramba and Gaṇanāyaka, etc., which sufficiently speak about the various aspects of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka.

The above description makes certain important indications about Ganésa' and his worship: (a) the people of the Mahābhārata age were not only conversant with Gaṇapati but he was also popularly propitiated in those days, as the author of the great epic himself medidates over him. (b) it apparently speaks about one of his most important aspects, i.e. "God of wisdom and the lord of learning (reading and writing)". (c) it also hints about another well-known quality of Gaṇēsa that he is easily pleased, even by a small amount of worship and, he appears as soon as he is remembered by his devotees.

But some scholars are of the opinion that this portion of the text is a late interpolation and does not belong to the original text as it is missing in the southern recensions of the great epic. M. Winternitze, a celebrated Western scholar, is the greatest champion of this view.[7]

But it is difficult to pass the final judgment with certainty, about the interpolation.

Al-Biruni, the famous Muslim writer, testifies the above account of the Ādiparva while he says that Gaṇēsa wrote Mahābhārata at the dictation of Vyāsa.[8] The similar story, revealing the same feature, was related to him by some Indian Pandits.

6. Vide—Mahābhārata, Ādiparva, 1/77-83.

7. M. Winternitze, *Gaṇēsa in the Mahābhārata*, JRAS., 1898, pp. 382-83.

8. Al-Biruni, *India* (Tr. by Sachau), I, p. 134.

The Vēdic texts also speak, about Gaṇapati's aspect where he is connected with wisdom, knowledge and learning etc. and was regarded as the patron of art and letters.[9]

A Rājaputana painting, now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, verifies this fact, as in this painting Gaṇēsa is depicted as writing the Mahābhārata.[10] This painting belongs to the 17th century.

In a Nēpālēse-miniature, preserved is a Tantric manuscript—Piṅgalamāla, Gaṇēsa is represented as sitting in the cross-egged posture (lotus-posture) on the right side and is depicted as holding his broken tusk downward, making it a stylus to write the great epic.[11]

In the Purāṇas often occur the references which speak highly about this aspect of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka.

Even *Gāyatrī-Tantra* regards him as a great writer when it refers to the fact that Ganēsa wrote all the Tantras at the dictation of his father Śiva.[12]

The Anusāsana Parva of the epic speaks about the plurality of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka in this Parva. The Gaṇapatis or the Ganēsvaras and the Vināyakās are mentioned amongst the Gods who are omnipresent and closely observe the activities of the human beings.

The same Parva further describes that the Ganēsvaras—the Gaṇapatis and the Vināyakās are quite capable and powerful enough to remove all sins, to avert all evils and difficulties, if properly propitiated.[14]

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9. *Rigveda,* 2/23/1, (*b*) *Taittrīya Āraṇyaka.* 10/1.

10. Coomāraswāmy, A. K., in the *Bulletin of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts,* XXV, p. 30.

11. *Vide—Pingalamāla* a Tantric Text (13th century).

12. *Vide—Gāyatri Tantra.*

13. *Mahābhārata*—Anusāsana parva, 151/26 V.

14. *Mahābhārata,* Anusāsana parva, 151/57 V.

Anusāsana Parva also speaks about the significance of Gaṇapati-Vināyakā's worship. While describing the importance of the great Sāvitrimantra, it is emphatically mentioned that along with other gods, Gaṇapati-Vināyakās should be properly propitiated before the commencement of any undertaking whether religious or wordly. Ganēsa should be worshipped by all those who desire victory in the battlefield, who aspire to attain success in all walks of life and he is also to be invoked first before setting out on a journey, occupying a new house and before starting any activity.[15] So, Sāvitri Mantra mentioning about the efficacy of the worship of the Gaṇapati-Vināyakās, categorically speaks about the Agrapūja (first-worship) of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka.

In the *Harivamsa*, the Vināyakās are described by the side of the Rākshasās, the Pisāchas, the Bhūtas, etc.[16]

The "Gaṇas" and the "Gaṇapatis" are frequently mentioned in the Mahābhārata. It seems that there were certain 'Gaṇas' (clans) having either the oligarchical or the republican forms of governments, with their elected rulers known as "Gaṇapatis". It appears difficult to know the actual meaning of the term "Gananut svasakethan" which occurs frequently in the great epic.

This great text also informs us that in the conquest of the North India these 'gaṇas' (the republican clans) were conquered by the great Pāṇḍava—Arjuna.[17] The above mentioned seven clans, quite possible, are the same 'Samasaptaka' people, described in the Drōna Parva of the Mahābhārata. The 'Samsaptaka' people of the Mahābhārata were brave and great fighters and were known for their freedom-loving habits.[18]

C. V. Vaidya identifies them with the modern 'Afridis' and other clans of the north-west border of India.[19] Known for their predatary habits these people were famous for their love of

15. Anusāsana-parva, Sāvitri Mantra.

16. *Harivamsa*, 84 (10, 697).

17. *Mahābhārata*, Drōṇa parva (I)

18. Ibid (I).

19. Vaidya, C. V., *Epic India*, p. 185.

freedom and they were noted for their chivalry since very early period of Indian history. These people preferred the republican form of government.

There are many hints about how one could become the 'Gaṇapati' of a 'gaṇa' and thus the position of the 'gaṇapati' was cherished and aspired by ambitious persons to be attained. Considering the above mentioned facts, M. Vaidya finds himself constrained to identify these 'gaṇas' with the republican clans and 'gaṇapatis' with the elected archons (heads) of these republican clans.[20] The elephant-headed god Gaṇapati-Vināyaka might have become a popular god with these republican tribes.

The epithet 'gaṇapati' was used by the rulers and the heads of the Kingdoms as we know of one king 'Gaṇapatināga" who was extirpated by Samudragupta.[21]

'Gaṇēśvara' the generally accepted name of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka, is also used for Siva and Viṣnu in the Mahābhārata, which naturally rouses our curiousity in this context. The use of the epithet (appellation) 'Ganēśvara' for 'Śiva and Viṣnu shows the close connections amongst these three gods and also hints about the intimate relationship of the worship of these deities, Śiva, Ganēśa and Viṣnu.

The author of the Mahābhārata tells us that 'Gaṇapatitva' (the position of ganapati) could be attained with the blessings of Mahādēva (Śiva).[22] Yajurvēda also expresses the similar view point pertaining to this fact when Rudra's "Gaṇapatitva" is mentioned.[23]

In the Atharva-Upaniṣad, Rudra is identified with Gaṇapati Vināyaka which goes to show the close connections between Śiva and Gaṇēsa.[24]

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20. C. V. Vaidya, *Epic India*, p. 185.
21. Allahabad Pillar Ins. Gupta Inscription, Fleet.
22. Vide - *Mahabharata*, Vanaparva.
23. *Yajurveda*, Madhyndina Samhita, 12/15.
24. Vide, *Atharva Upanisad.*

Pārskara Grihya sūtra also throws light on this fact when it says that it is because of the intimate relations between the father and the son that Rudra-Śiva is described as "Gaṇapati.[25]

Similar fact was revealed by a Gānapatya (an exclusive worshipper of Gaṇapati) to Ādi-śaṅkrāchārya.[26] The Mahābhārata itself tries to clear the position when it says—Puja Ātma Manushasya.

From the above study of the great epic we come to know that Gaṇapati-worship was not only prevalent but was also popular with the people of the Mahābhārata-erā, as Vyāsa himself shows his full devotion to the elephant-headed deity—Gaṇapati-Vināyaka. Some of his main aspects as Vighnēsa (lord of obstacles) and the 'god of wisdom' and the 'lord of learning' are amply indicated. This text also hints that he can be easily pleased and he always appears to protect the interests of his sincere devotees. An important point to be noted is that Gaṇapati-Vināyaka's plurality and omnipresence is mentioned in the epic, which resemble with his description in Satrudriya and Maṇavagrihya Sūtra.[28] Another important indication is about the "Agrapūja" (First to be worshipped) of Gaṇapati which is in vogue even to-day. Gaṇapati-Vināyakā's malevolent nature, as he is the trouble creator, is also highlighted. But the text also hints about the great transformation from the malevolent to the benevolent one, as he could avert troubles if properly propitiated. The great epic gives an assurance that those who propitiate the name of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka with the purity of mind and sincerity of the heart, shall be redeemed from all sorts of sins and evils.

The above study of the Mahābharata reveals that though the people in that age were quite conversant with Gaṇapati-worship yet the Gānapatyas (the exclusive worshippers of Gaṇapati) might have not been in abundance and it had to take still more time to develop into a full-fledged cult.

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25. Pārskara-Gri. I/16/14.
26. Ananda-tirtha, *Sankaradigvijaya* (Anandasrama, p. 527 commentary (quoted) verses, 384-85.)
27. The *Mahabharata*, 3/313/72.
28. (a) cf. Satrudriya. (b) *Manavagrihyasutra*, 2/14.

IMPACT OF BUDDHISM AND JAINISM ON HINDUISM

BY

THIRU Y. KRISHNAN

Religion and Society of Vēdic Āryans:

The Vēdic Āryans were nature worshippers. The forces of nature like thunder and rain (Indra), water (Varuṇa) fire (Agni), wind or storm (Vāyu), sun (Āditya) etc. filled the people with awe and commanded their worship. There was no supreme personal god as in later Hinduism. It was a religion of sacrifice performed to propitiate these gods. Vēdic rituals prescribed the mode for the performance of the sacrifices. A Vēdic injunction makes sacrifices an essential element of salvation: '*Svargo kāmo jageta*',[1] the heaven desiring must sacrifice. In fact the sacrifices were deemed to be more powerful than the gods inasmuch as the prayers were bound to be fullfilled if the sacrifices were performed with meticulous correctness.[2]

The sacrifices consisted of offerings of material wealth including *bali* of animals which constituted the principal element of wealth

1. Benjamin Walker (Ed.) *Hindu World* Vol. II 'Sacrifice'.
2. Das Gupta: *Indian Idealism* p. 1. Renou "*Vedic India*" p. 169, points out that what is fundamental in Vedic period is to know the rites, and to have faith in the efficacy of the rites. These must be performed with exactitude and any error therein is a great fault.

As pointed out by Macdonell: *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 153, while in the *Rig Vēda*, gods are the object of devotion and sacrifice a means of influencing them, with *Yajur Vēda*, the sacrifice becomes all important. The Officiating priest believed that with the help of sacrifice, he could compel the gods to do his will. "By means of it the Brahmans may, in fact, be said to hold the gods in their hands." Edgerton in "*The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy*", p. 17, says that "in the period succeeding the hymns of the *Rig Vēda*, the gods became supernumeraries. The now all important sacrifices no longer persuaded but compelled them to do what the sacrificer desired.........".

in a pastoral society. These sacrifices were called *yajñas* in whose performance *Brahmins* were employed, for recitation of *mantras* of the *Rig Vēda*, for the performance of various rites and making offerings as prescribed in the *Yajur Vēda* and for the determination of the appropriate time of the day, night, season etc. for their performance in accordance *with Vēdaṅga Jyotiṣa.*

In return for the offerings, the Vèdic gods were supposed to grant boons and confer prosperity on the devotees. Thus the Vēdic religion was a religion of *quid pro quo* of give and take, making of offerings as a consideration for the benefits expected from gods in return. In fact according to the *Nirukta*[3] vii, 15, the word *dèva* means 'one who gives to man'. The Vēdic Āryans prayed to *Śakti* as *Varada dēvi,*[4] the goddess that grants prayers or wishes. Again, the "Vēdic worship of the natural forces is not quite sincere but utilitarian".[5] We fear the gods as their wrath can harm us and we love or adore them as they have the power to do us good in wordly life. Thus "the gods were conceived as strong rather than good, powerful rather than moral"[6] It is significant that in Vēdic times, the word *dharma* did not mean righteousness; it meant the benefits derived from sacrifices, and the term *karma* connotes performance of Vēdic sacrifices.[7]

A sense of moral values, of good and evil, does not appear to have been well developed in this period. The world was no doubt regulated by '*rita*' but that was in the sense of cosmos as distinct from chaos,[8] ordered movement, growth and decay, of change in the universe viz. day and night, cycle of seasons etc., in brief the 'course of things'.[9] Moral consciousness was at best in a very embryonic stage. The Āryans believed in rebirth but the doctrine of *karma* and of sin was undeveloped. The law of *karma*

3. Radhakrishnan: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I p. 72.
4. Radhakrishnan: *ibid* Vol. I p. 89.
5. Radhakrishnan: *ibid* Vol. I p. 106.
6. Radhakrishnan: *ibid* Vol. I p. 106.
7. Das Gupta: *ibid* p. 2.
8. R. N. Dandekar: *Some Aspects of the History of Hinduism* p. 88.
9. Macdonell: *Vedic Mythology* p. 11.

dealt with the infallibility of Vēdic sacrificial practices; it had no ethical or moral content.[10] Consequently, retribution was a function of the Vēdic *Dēvatas* especially *Yama.* Rituals[11] were intended to ensure happiness and success, in this life and not in a life hereafter.

The Vēdic society was divided into four castes headed by *Brahmins*—the learned and teaching class, the *Kṣatriya*—the warrior class, the *Vaiśyas*—the business community and the *Sūdras*—the agriculturists and the artisans. The *Brahmins* were naturally the conductors of all religious ceremonies. The Vēdic Āryans ate meat and therefore, did not believe in *ahimsa* and vegetarianism especially when *bali* was an essential part of their *yajñas.* The life was organised into 3 *āśramas,* that of a *brachmacāri* (of students). of a *grihasthi* or householder or of a *vānaprasthi* or an anchorite. The life of a *grihastha* was enjoined as a compulsory stage in a man's career on earth to ensure the perpetuation of the human species. The third *aśrama* was that of the *Vanaprasthi* where a person became a *muni* or a *riṣi* engaged in philosophical speculation and religious practices free from the cares of professional life which a householder had necessarily to follow. The life of a renunciation of wordly ties, that is of a *sanyāsi* was not encouraged.

In the *Sāma Vēda,*[12] we see the beginnings of an attack on sacrifices. It says "O ye gods! we use no sacrifical stake. We slay no victims. We worship entirely by the repetition of the sacred verses". The *Upaniṣads,* which are traditionally regarded as a part of the *Vēdas* were the first to spearhead an attack against them. They seriously discounted the utility of *mantras,* of

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10. Das Gupta: *ibid,* p. 9 the word *karman* in Vēdic period means 'ritual act'. Renou *ibid* 177.

11. Kunhan C. Raja: *The Quintessence of the Rig Veda,* p. 10. As Renou *ibid* p. 159 points out, the Indian in Vedic times had no desire for the beyond. He feared death, he prayed "for the full period of life", he regarded death as evil and life as in its proper nature, happy.

12. Quoted by Radhakrishnan: *ibid* vol. I, p. 107.

the performance of *yajñas* and of reading the Vēdic scriptures. *Mundakopaniṣad*[13] I. I. 4-5 clearly classifies the *Vēdas* and *Vēdaṅgas* being "the lower knowledge" and says in I. 2 7-8 that "ceremonials and sacrifices lead men round and round and not to the ultimate goal...". They represented a school of philosophy which emphasised the attainment of *ātma, vidya,* the knowledge of *atman and Brahman.* They emphasise tha value of purity of resolve and earnestness, forswearing evil and subduing oneself.[14] These schools were, however, exclusive in character being confined to a select few in the confines of the forests. Their teachers also emphasised the esoteric character of this teaching, to be confined only to the few who had the capacity to understand them. Consequently, the *Upaniṣadis* revolt against Vēdic orthodoxy had rather limited impact immediately.

Buddhism and Jainism were, however, mass movements which made a frontal attack on Vēdic religion.

Buddhism, along with Jainism, stressed the doctrine of *karma* as the sole determinant of the plane of existence of a soul on rebirth and the quality of its life especially in human form. Its immediate impact was to dethrone the Vēdic gods from their pedestals as regulators of human affairs in this world and who could be propitiated to relent towards frailties. Its far reaching consequences were to usher in an ethical revolution. It is the good and evil quality of our actions that solely determines the future destiny of a soul. This brought a profound and an abiding change in Indian religious consciousness. Now *dharma* stood for righteousness which had been pithily and aptly expressed by the *Upaniśads*[15]—*satyam vada* (speak the truth), *dharmam* çara (follow the path of righteousness) (Taittiriya I. 11.i), *Satyamēva jayatē nānritam* (truth triumphs and not falsehood), *Mundaka* III.i.6.

As a natural corollary to the doctrine of *karma, ahimsa* became the supreme article of faith and compassion, and altruism

13. C. Rajagopalacari: *Upanisads* (Bhāratiya Vidya Bhavan) p. 52-53.

14. *Kathopanisad* I. 2. 23-24 Rajagopalachari *ibid* p. 10.

15. Rajagopalachari: *ibid* p. 43 and p. 61.

replaced prayers and rituals for self-advancement. This in turn bred vegetarianism which has since then been a unique feature of Indian society.

On the philosophical plane, it encouraged the growth of a spirit of detachment and of the doctrine of work without motive of expectation of reward.

Thus the *rita* of *Vēdas* was replaced by the *dharma* and, ethics replaced rituals for spiritual advancement. Thus Buddhism and Jainism laid the foundations of Indian ethics.

Buddhism and Jainism also emphasised renunciation as an essential pre-requisite to the attainment of higher spiritual life. Therefore, they emphasised the supreme importance of cutting oneself off from worldly ties.

Buddhism postulated that craving or desire, *triṣna* is the cause of all suffering. It is the cause of rebirth and of suffering inherent in existence; suppression of desire or *nirōdha* can bring about a cessation of rebirth and hence of suffering. In brief, Buddhism postulated that liberation or *nirvāṇa* could be attained by destroying this craving.

It logically follows from this that the way of escape from suffering was renunciation of worldly ties.

Consequently, Buddhism emphasised the need to follow a life of renunciation and cultivation of an attitude of detachment.

This had profound implications. Instead of aiming at *bhukti* worldly prosperity as was the aim of Vēdic religion, now the aim was *mukti* or emancipation. More importantly, rituals and sacrifices were replaced by self-discipline of the body and mind through *yogic* or ascetic practices, meditation and self-culture.

It may be accepted that, in the ultimate sense, the philosophical content of Buddhism was essentially the same as that of *Upaniṣads*. They were the two sides of the same medal. While *Upaniṣads* emphasise the supreme importance of *Brahman*, of the *ātman* merging itself in Brahman, the supreme Reality which is

indefiniable, inexplicable and unknowable and transcendental, Buddhism emphasised that the objective material world was transient and perishable and that the soul or the *pudgala* had no abiding existence and that there was no supreme being or *Paramātman* or *Brahman* and, therefore, the spiritual progress lay in becoming i.e. in the attainment of liberation by the extinction of the transmigrating self or *nāmarūpa* in the undefined, indescribable and transcendental *nirvāṇa*. Whereas the *Upaniṣads* realised reality through intuitive insight, Buddhism reached the same goal through logical, an uncompromising and bold analysis of the conditioned or dependent character of the subjective and objective world.

The emphasis however, on a life of renunciation naturally led to a large number taking to the life of *bhikṣu* (Buddhist monk) and a *yati* or *sādhu* (a Jaina monk) and gradually led to their being organised into a *samgha* or monkish community. This, in turn, produced its own effect on Hindu society. The *sannyāsa āśrama* was added as the fourth *āśrama* in the life of a good Hindu. In course of time, the order of *sannyāsins* multiplied and Saṅkara, in the 8th century A.D. organised them into an order *Dasanāmis*. The overweening importance of Vēdic *Yajñas* had already undermined the importance of Vēdic gods.

It was now the overthrow of Vēdic religion in so far as it is enjoined performance of sacrifices and rituals, as a result of the Vēdāntic teaching of the *Upaniṣads* and of Buddhism and Jainism which paved the way for the emergence of *āgamic dharma* involving worship of *Paurānic* gods like Śiva, Viṣnu, Durga, Nārāyaṇa, Bhagavata etc., as distinct from *naigamic* or *Vēdic dharma*. *Karma mārga* of the Vēdic religion was transformed into religious altruism, of service of humanity. Now *jñāña* and *bhaktī mārgas* could grow.

All the Indian religions have encouraged religious and philosophical speculation. There has been no attempt at conformity and at stifling dissent in the realm of belief and thought. This attitude is aptly summed up by the saying in the *Rig Veda*[16]: *Ekam Sat*

16. *Rig Veda* i. 164. 46 A. C. Bose; *The Cali of the Vedas.*

vipra bahuda Vadanti. Truth is one but the learned call it by many names. Again the doctrine of *ahimsa,* not only in deed but also in word and thought, discouraged any tendency to curb dissent. In consequence toleration has been a most significant feature of India's religious ethos. Jainism (and to some extent *Nyāya Vaiśēṣikas*),[17] however, provided a firm doctrinal basis for such an approach. The Jains believed in the metaphysical theory that reality has numerous facets, that is, in *anēkantavāda* (scepticism) as distinct from *ēkantavāda* (dogmatism). The Jaina doctrine of *syadvāda* is also called the *saptabhaṅginaya* (Seven Forms of Judgment). It seeks to establish that one cannot postulate anything definite or conclusive about the observed or objective phenomena. Their description has, at best, a relative validity with reference to the time, place and the circumstances and absence of alternative possibilities. In fact, one of the seven judgements of this doctrine maintains that an object may be indescribable *(avaktavyam)* in all its conditions and circumstances. Thus the Jains drove home the point that our apprehension is partial and we cannot claim for it dogmatic validity or infallibility.

This attitude could only promote an atmosphere of intellectual humility and tolerance and encourage free thinking which have been the most distinguishing feature of Indian religious life.

Origin of Image and Idol worship:

India owes the cult of idol worship to Buddhism. As already mentioned above, the Vēdic Āryans worshipped the forces of nature These were not represented in human form. In other words Vēdic religion was unanthropomorphic or uniconic.

Early Buddhist art, in keeping with the contemporary Vēdic tradition, did not represent the Buddha in human form. In fact, his representation in human form was sedulously eschewed. He was represented only symbolically, a *bodhi* tree with an empty seat underneath stood for Buddha's enlightenment at Bodha Gaya; a wheel with two deers on either side represented the first sermon of the Buddha at Sārnāth; a *stupa* represented the *mahāparinirvāṇa,*

17. This has reference to the theory of *abhava* of the Nyāya Vaiśēsikas.

the great Decease of the Buddha. Likewise the early Jaina art. as seen in the Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves at Bhuvanēśvar (Orissa) only depicts the typical Jaina symbols and is devoid of human representation of the Mahāvīra or other *tīrthankaras*. Though the early Buddhist and Jaina art was uniconic, the panels of the *stupas* at Sanchi (300 BC to 50 A.D.) Bhurhut (183-72 B.C), early Amarāvati (200-100 B.C.) and early Bodha Gaya (1st century B.C.) depicting incidents from the life of Buddha and the worship of Jaina religious symbols including the *Kēvala* tree at Udayagiri and Khandagiri are frankly deifical considering the manner in which the devotees are shown paying homage to these symbols. It was a symbol worship but not icon worship. Under the impact of Greco-Roman influence, the Buddha was represented in human form in Gāndhara and Mathura in the beginning of the Christian era. This was a revolutionary development being a break from the Vēdic tradition which did not represent the divine being in human form. This led to a very widespread and almost universal representation of the supreme being or a *mahāpuruṣa* anthropomorphically. As a natural corollary, idol worship gave a tremendous boost to the *bhakti* cult.

Origin of the temples:

Another important related field in which Buddhism had profound influence was the temple architecture. In early Buddhist cave art, the *caitya* (*stupa*) had a nave in front, where the worshippers could gather, to do *caitya* worship. The two essential elements of the Hindu temple architecture viz. the *garbha griha* and the *maṇḍapa* are modelled on the *caitya* and the *nave* respectively of the Buddhist caves. As soon as the *stupa* was detached from the nave, it becomes the prototype of the later *garbhagriha* and the nave that of the *maṇḍapa.*

The *śikhara* of the North Indian temples has clearly its origin in the *harmika* (tee) of the *stupa* which gradually became elongated. The other elements in Hindu architecture which have got Buddhist origin are the '*Caitya* windows' originally intended for lighting the interior of the rock-cut caves, the temples built in the style of *gaja pristha*, haviug room like the elephant back or *kubja pristha*,

barrel-roofed or semi-cylindrical roof, which was the natural superstructure of the Buddhist cave but which eventually fell into disuse. Examples of these are the Kapotēśvara temple Chezarla, Āndhra Pradēsh (4th century A.D.), and Bhīma and Sahādēva *rathas* at Mahābalipuram (6th century A.D.). The *gopurams* of South Indian temples are derived from the gateway of the Buddhist *stupas* like those we see at Sanchi.

To sum up, Buddhism and Jainism brought about a transformation of Vēdic religion. This profound change is vividly illustrated by the change in the connotation of certain terms having religious, philosophical and social significance. To reiterate, the *dēvata* of the Vēdic texts is one who gives but in post-Vēdic literature, he is a being invested with super-normal powers and is therefore divine. The word *yajñā* in Vēdic literature, means, worship, devotion, prayer but in post-Vēdic literature, it stands for offering, oblation, sacrifice, the utility of which is seriously questioned. It is replaced by *Karma*. Again the word *yoga* in Vēdic literature has no philosophical significance. It means yoking, joining, harnessing, use, performance, and application. But in the post-Vēdic religious and philosophical literature, it stands for concentration, contemplation, meditation, the means by which *ātma* or, soul can attain union which *paramātma* or the supreme spirit or union of soul with matter. Sociologically the Vedic ideal of *riṣi* (sage) or *muni* (an inspired person) was replaced by that of *bhikṣu* or *sādhu*. Most importantly, the *rita* of the Vēdas is replaced by *dharma*, ethics, code of conduct, performance of duty and this brought about an ethical revolution. Buddhism introduced idol worship and encouraged the building of temples and deeply influenced their architecture. Above all, Buddhism and Jainism encouraged an atmosphere of tolerance and free thought which has perhaps no parallel anywhere else in the world.

FOLK SONGS OF TAMIḺ NĀḌU*

BY

M. ARUNACHALAM, M.A.

Tamiḷ and Sanskrit are two of the oldest languages not only in India but also among all the languages of the world. But Tamiḷ, unlike the other, continues to be a spoken language even to this day, spoken by more than four hundred million people in India and abroad. Besides, Tamiḷ has had an unbroken literary tradition whose origins are lost in the mists of pre-history. Scholars would say that songs of the people, handed down through word of mouth from the past, what we now call folk-song, would have preceded literary history. We have, no doubt, a rich collection of large volumes of literary composition of over two thousand years. But we do not come across any collection of folk-songs of the early periods which should naturally have preceded any literary composition. Traces however of folk-song influence are discernible in *Tolkāppiyam* and in classical poems like *Silappadhikāram*. Pisi (பிசி) mentioned in Tolkāppiyam corresponds to the modern riddles; the examples cited by the commentators give us the impression that is of the folk-song type.

What is a Folk.song?

Songs which have been composed without a studied attempt at composition and sung by the people at the various levels of society are now called folk-songs. A folk-song may be a short piece or a long one. It has the stamp of age upon it. It is always in easy and simple language, often with an element of assonance. It may be an expression of joy, of fun and frolic, of mere gossip and play, of sorrow and despair, of satire, ridicule and banter; sometimes also of wit and wisdom. Folk-song is a source of enjoyment for the community; it belongs to the entire society.

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Folk-songs have supplied the motifs and patterns to literary composition through the centuries. Folk-song is in itself a specimen of the *Muttamiḻ* concept in the language. It comprises in itself the three divisions of Tamiḻ—*Iyal, Isai* and *Nātakam.* Iyal is the composition itself, the spoken Tamiḻ. Isai is the music inherent in the folk-song. Nātakam is the dance element; most folk-songs, we may remember, are set to a rustic music and are intended for dance also.

Silappadhikāram:

We find many folk-song patterns incorporated into *Silappadhikāram.* All of them take the form of musical compositions. The songs such as *Kānalvāri, Āychiyār kuṟavai, Vēttuva vāri, Kunrak-kuṟavai* and some others, all seem to have been modelled on contemporary folk-song patterns. The text of *Silappadhikāram* is in the *āśiriyam* metre, while all these songs are in different musical metres which would correspond to the modern *viruttam* and *tāḻiśai.* The change from the rigid *āśiriyam* metre, the element of music, the simple language and the subject matter itself, such as the praise of the Kāvēri, of Tirumāl, Muruga, and Koṟṟavai—all seem to be an echo of contemporary folk literature.

The commentator Adiyārkkunāllār mentions one hundred song-dances (வரிக்கூத்து) in the course of his exposition. All these are obviously popular dances performed to the singing of the folk music of the period. We do not however now have any glimpse into that music and that dance, but yet his words serve as a window, opening up before our eyes a wide range of folk literature and dance which had since gone out of currency. He himself remarks that many literary models had become extinct in his day.

Types of Folk-songs:

The types of folk-songs have been innumerable, as we can gather from *Silappadhikāram.* Yet many more are found a thousand years later in the songs of Tattuvarāyar and the Siddhas. We have children's songs—sung by boys and girls while engaged in play; action songs; songs for dances (கூத்து); songs sung as a

pastime, as a sort of entertainment to occupy the leisure hours; work songs, sung by men and women in the course of their vocations in life; pastoral songs; songs on social functions; songs for children; songs of patriotism, songs on social reform, devotional songs and many more. Before taking up these songs, I shall say a few words here on the song patterns which we see in the poetry of Tattuvarāyar and the Siddhas. All the folk-song patterns could not obviously have been incorporated into literary compositions. We should remember therefore that there were many more patterns of folk-songs than are evident in the literature.

Tattuvarāyar:

This Vēdanta writer (of the 15th century) has made a profuse use of the folk-song motifs. Of his several large volumes of religious poetry, *Pāduturai* deserves special mention here. Of its 138 songs, about a 100 songs are modelled on the folk songs of the period. Some had been copied from the songs written before him—like the *ammāṉai, annai, pallāṇḍu and undi.* But the major portion of the songs are his own literary adaptations. I shall mention here a few of them; on animals—the parrot, the cock, the crow, the *kuyil,* the lizard and the serpent; on the different vocations in life—the barber, *chetti,* carpenter, brahmin, goldsmith, gipsy (*kuṟatti*), *paraya,* the snake charmer, trumpet blower and the washerman; on games—the ball, dice, swing etc; on family relationship—sister, father, mother and master. Such songs had been in existence in his day in folk-song form. Tattuvarāyar was an enthusiast, eager to propagate the *advaita vēdānta* cult, which did not have much popularity in the Tamiḻ land till his day. He believed that the singing of the songs giving out his philosophy on the folk-song model would help his cause; and so he invented these new literary patterns. No one in the vast range of the Tamiḻ literary history of the last two thousand years has used as many folk-song patterns as this one poet.

The Siddhas:

The Siddha poetry reveals to us another aspect of the folk-songs. The Siddhas were many and they were all realised souls. Some of them have given expression to their spiritual and

mystic experience in popular language in sweet and simple form. A happy Siddha calls his mind *pēy* (ghost) and addresses his songs to it.

சமயம் ஆறுமடி—தன்னாலே வந்ததடி ;
சுமை நின்றஇடம்—அகப்பேய் !
ஆராய்ந்து சொல்வாயோ.

(Translation at the end)

Aḻuguṇi Siddha calls the Supreme Being '*my Kaṇṇamma*' and makes his requests to that Being.

பையூரிலே இருந்து பாழூரிலே பிறந்து 1
மெய்யூரில் போவதற்கு வேதாந்த வீடறியேன் !
மெய்யூரில் போவதற்கு வேதாந்த வீடறிந்தால்,
பையூரும் பையூரும்—என் கண்ணம்மா !
பாழாய் முடியாவோ? 2

The Tamiḻ national poet Bhārati seems to have been fascinated by this address and has himself sung a large number beautiful lyrics, all addressed to *Kaṇṇamma*. The songs of Iḍaikkāṭṭu Siddha are in the nature of a dialogue between two cowherds, narrating spiritual experiences in their language. There is one song in their poetry invoking the peacock to dance:

ஆடுமயிலே—நடம்—ஆடுமயிலே
ஆதியணி சேடனென்று ஆடுமயிலே 3

which is both simple and superb as a lyric. This song has inspired Chengalvarāya Pillai in the 20th century to write his famous peacock song:

ஆடுமயிலே—நிர்த்தம்—ஆடுமயிலே—தணிகை
ஆறுமுக நாதன்வர ஆடுமயிலே
பாடுமடியார் பரவ ஆடுமயிலே,—பரன்
பால குகன் ஏறிவர ஆடுமயிலே. 4

The song of Kaḍuveḷi Siddha is equally famous. It is composed in the famous poetic form since known as the *ānandak-kaḷippu*, very popular among wandering minstrels who roam about the land begging with a rustic simple stringed harp. Who does not know these songs from this Siddha?

பாபம் செய்யாதிரு மனமே—நாளைக்
கோபம்செய்தே எமன் கொண்டோடிப் போவான் (பாபம்) 5

நந்த வனத்திலோ ராண்டி—அவன்
நாலாறு மாதமாய்க் குயவனை வேண்டிக்
கொண்டு வந்தானொரு தோண்டி—அதைக்
கூத்தாடிக் கூத்தாடிப் போட்டுடைத் தாண்டி 6

The song has a deeper esoteric meaning; the soul, by the grace of God stayed in the mother's womb for ten months and got this body; but not using it properly it has allowed the body to perish. Even scholars today may not be able to say whether these songs are really folk-songs or whether they really have an author; such had been their popular appeal.

The songs of Pāmbāṭṭi Siddha are equally famous. His is a mystic song which invokes the Kuṇḍalini śakti in the human body as the serpent and asks it to play. '*Ādu pāmbē—telintāḍu pāmbē*' is the opening line of his song:

ஆடுபாம்பே—தெளிந்தாடு பாம்பே—சிவன்
அடியினை கண்டோமென்றாடு பாம்பே. 7

It has become very popular in this country; a short while ago musical concerts were not considered complete without a recital of this song. This is also in a very simple folk song pattern.

நாதர் முடிமேலிருக்கும் நாகப் பாம்பே
நச்சுப்பையை வைத்திருக்கும் நல்லபாம்பே
பாதலத்திற் குடிபுகும் பைகொள் பாம்பே
பாடிப்பாடி நின்று விளையாடு பாம்பே. 8

Kudambai Siddha addresses his songs to the child wearing the குதம்பை—Kudambai, pendant. His songs though sweet and short and most popular, are also the most obscure:

மாங்காய் பாலுண்டு மலைமே லிருப்போர்க்குத்
தேங்காய் பால் ஏதுக்கடி—குதம்பாய்!
தேங்காய் பால் ஏதுக்கடி.

The fact that the Siddhas chose these and similar forms for expressing their spiritual experiences indicates that forms were current and popular in the folklore of the period and the Siddhas exploited them effectively for their own purposes. They always use

the spoken language and never strive to make their language high-flown.

We shall now examine in detail some of the more important types of folk-songs.

Action Songs:

Saint Manikkavāchakar employs a large number of folk-song patterns in his *Tiruvāchakam. Undi, Kōttumbi* and *sāḻal* had been used earlier by Tirumaṅgai Ālwar and others, but he uses the *ammāṉai, ponnūsal, porchuṇṇam, pūvalli, teḷḷēṇam, tōḷnōkkam* and some others. Of these, *ammānai* and *oosal* had been used in *Silappadhikāram* also; the rest are his innovations. All these are actions taken from folk-lore and folk-song. However, they very nature of *tellēṇam* and *toḷ-nōkkam* had been forgotten after him and we do not know now what exactly is the action they represent. *Ammānai* was being played with cowries.

Among the other action songs, one of the most important is the *pantaḍi*—game of balls. Women had generally been associated with ball games and never men. We get many illustrations of such women's games in *Peruṅkathai, Silappadhikāram, Chintāmaṇi* and *Chulāmaṇi.* The last three books employ a rhythmic lilting metre, suited to the movement of the ball, in order to depict the game. The songs had no doubt their origins in folk-song. This folk-song appears to have had a continuous history, because we find many such *pantadi* songs, later being put down in print in the 17th century, such as the *Meenakshi amman pantaḍi* and so on.

The *oyil kummi,* in vogue in Madurai and Coimbatore districts, is a very familiar action song of the masses. Men and women hold a small napkin in their hand, and dance round in groups, keeping rhythmic jump and dance, singing songs, mostly in praise of Muruga and deities like Kāḷi. In the dance, the feet, the arms and the whole body play their part.

Boys' Play songs:

Here and elsewhere, I have mentioned frequently the songs and dances of women folk. This is not as though songs are the

sole right of girls in play. Small boys play many games in groups and they also have recourse to songs improvised for the moment. *Balin-chandu gudu*, called *kabaddi* by the modern physical education teachers in our schools, had given rise to a number of such short and crisp lines. In this well known game, the players are divided into two opposing camps of equal number. One member of the first raids the other camp chanting a line, repeating the last word thereof continuously till he goes out of breath and steps back or is caught out. The chanting of the line gives scope to the composition of innumerable couplets for the purpose. I distincty remember one which we used in our childhood days:

நாங்கு கோங்கு பம்பரம்
நாங்களாடும் பம்பரம்—பம்பரம் பம்பரம் பம்பரம்

The modern regimentation of all education has of course invaded the physical education field also, where a uniform chant, the word *kabaddi* has been prescribed for all players of all schools, thus drying up the inventive faculty of the playing children.

Dance Songs:

Action songs, play songs and games are all in a sense dance-songs also. But yet there have been songs specifically in use for dances or *abhinaya*. Some of them have been classical pieces, having the force of folk-songs because the authorship was not generally known. One is a *kirtanam* (or *padam*) beginning with the words '*vāsalidu vāsalidu—valarndōṅgum vāsaḷidu*'

வாசலிது, வாசலிது
வளர்ந்தோங்கும் வாசலிது!
காசி கன்யாகுமரி முதல்
காசினி எல்லாம் புகழும் (வாசலிது)

Another is a group of *tālaṭṭu* songs, beginning '*neela mayil vāhanano*'; though this song had been in use as an anonymous song for *abhinaya* purposes, it has been found to form part of Chidambaraswāmi's songs in praise of Murugan at Tirupporur:

நீலமயில் வாகனனே, நெட்டிவே லாயுதனே
கோலம்நிறை கோழிக்கொடிபடைத்த சேவகனே!

ஆறிரண்டு தோளானே, ஆறுமுகத்தானே,
தேறு மறை கொஞ்சும் சிறு சதங்கைத் தாளானே!
பிரமனறியாய் பிரணவத்தினர்த்தம்
அரனார் மனங்குளிர அன்றுரைத்த சற்குருவே! 11

The popularity of the song is a tribute to the lyrical quality of Chidambaraswāmi. Similar songs are many.

Songs of Entertainment:

Folk-songs had grown round the leisure hours of literates and semi-literates, as an intelligent source of pastime right through the centuries. We have glimpse of them in the reference to riddles in *Tolkāppiyam* and they have been growing ever since, The most famous songs are those of Kāḷamēgham and Iraṭṭaiyar, the *slēsha* songs (ச்லேடை) where with the same word arrangement and sound, a double meaning is implied in the utterance. Their songs have been used in the later centuries as exercises to test the mental alertness of people. A verse from Kāḷamēgham may be quoted here:

கத்துக்கடல் சூழ்நாகைக் காத்தான்தன் சத்திரத்தில்
அத்தமிக்கும் போதில் அரிசிவரும்—குத்தி
உலையிலிட ஊரடங்கும் ஓரகப்பை அன்னம்
இலையிலிட வெள்ளி எழும்.

Here the same set of words mention that the feeding in the Kathan's inn is very deplorable and also that it is of on excellent quality.

The collection which goes by the name of *Irusol-alankāram* and *muchol-alankāram* (இருசொல் அலங்காரம், முச்சொல் அலங்காரம்) also belongs to this category of intelligent exercises; a question of two parts (or three parts) is asked; a reply in one word or two is given, which answers both the parts of the question:

எருக்கிலை பழுப்பதேன்?
எருமைக் கன்று கூவதேன்?—பால்வற்றி 12

The thousands of riddles, old and new, may be added to this category.

The *Mūvar-ammānai,* a collection of more than 100 verses compiled in the 17th century, also belongs to this class of folk-song. *Ammānai* is one of the parts which make up a *kalambakam* poem. The term signifies a game of balls and cowries played by three girls; the first asks a clever question; the second uses her words and poses another question: the third gives an answer which replies both. The following is the first verse thereof:

ஈசன்பசுவாகி எமன் இளங்கன்றாகி
விசுபுகழ் ஆரூரின் வீதிவந்தார் அம்மானை!
விசுபுகழ் ஆரூரின் வீதிவந்தா ராமாகில்,
காசளவு பால்தான் கறக்குமோ அம்மானை?
கன்றை உதை காலி கறக்குமோ அம்மானை.

Both the questions and the answer end with the word *ammānai* and so the poem is known as an *ammānai* poem. It has been in vogue even among the illiterates till recently. These songs, by their elements of rhyme and alliteration, music and assonance, and repetition, have endeared themselves to the people at all levels for a number of centuries.

Villuppāṭṭu:

The villuppāṭṭu is a type of ballad-cum-folk song peculiar to the extreme south of Tamilnād. The *villu* (or a crude large bow) is struck to produce a large volume of sound, which is accompanied by the loud singing of several vocally capable persons together, to attract large crowds in days which had known no electricity and no mike. These served as sources of entertainment and relaxation to entire communities and often extended over the whole night. All subjects on earth have been incorporated in the *Villuppāṭṭu,* which is more of the nature of a ballad, than a folk-song.

Work-Songs:

Songs had been sung by men from the days they learnt vocal utterance to relieve the monotony and drudgery in the hard work of their various vocations in life. Work in the past had always been a social activity and groups of working men and women had always taken part in such group singing. The most common singing was

the pestle and mortar song. Grains are required to be de husked; others require to be powdered and converted into flour for the preparation of food. For these purposes the wooden pestle and mortar are used. Several women are engaged in this work. One sings a line; the others repeat it, or follow with other different lines, or merely utter a refrain. This type of song was known as the *vallaippāṭṭu*. *Vallai* is a term familiar in *Tolkāppiyam*. *Silappadhikāram* has given it a classical literary form, in its third canto, the *Vañjikkaṇḍam*: There are here three songs praising the three ruling monarchs; each is a song which the women sing while powdering the grains and praising the king. The following song from *kānal vari* is similar:

பவள உலக்கை கையால் பற்றி
தவள முத்தம் குறுவாள் செங்கண்
தவள முத்தம் குறுவாள் செங்கண்,
குவளை யல்ல கொடிய கொடிய.

(A lover looks at his lady-love pounding grain. Perhaps she does not return his love. He says: 'Her eyes are not lilies; there are very cruel'.) The *bharaṇi* poem (12th century) makes profuse use of this song motif, *vallaippāṭṭu*, in its concluding section where the ghosts gather in the battle field and cook a porridge out of the bodies of the men and animals slain in the battle. The pestle is mentioned in the *Silappadhikāram* verses and the *bharaṇi* poem but, a later poem, the *Iraṇyavadaippparaṇi* (13th century) invents a refrain mentioning the pestle as சும்மேலோ சும்முலக்காய்.

Tiruppor Chuṇṇam of *Tiruvāchakam* has also this theme. Here girls, servants of the Lord in the local temple, prepare bathing powder for Him, singing the song. Even today in the 20th century, this song is used religiously during the funeral ceremonies, when such powder is prepared for bathing the dead body before cremation. Again when lime mortar is being ground by working-class women for house construction purposes, they sing a song which is a variation of the *chuṇṇam* or *vallai-paṭṭu*. With the advent of universal cement construction, lime mortar has completely gone out of use, as also the pestle songs, sung during the mortar preparation.

Another type is the palanquin bearers' song. We are familiar with the English song sung by Sarojini Naidu: 'O Lighty, O Lightly, we bear her along'. Upto the first half of this century, religious heads were travelling from one place to another only on palanquins; these were also used to carry brides from their place to the groom's place. Carrying a palanquin is a heavy type of work and the numerous men employed for the purpose, usually had a song which not only enabled them to get over the tedium of work, but also helped them to step in unison under the weight according to the rhythmic pattern of the song sung. The songs had different refrains under different masters. I remember the palanquin bearers of Jñaniyār Swāmigaḷ of Tiruppādirippuliyūr uttered the sound 'vēl vēl' in conformity with his spirit of devotion to Muruga. However, with the advent of the motor car as a means of quick transport, the class of palanquin bearers has become almost extinct.

Boating does not occupy any prominent place in the lives of the Tamils today. But we know from history that the people oj the Saṅgam age had known shipping and that the Choḷas had a large maritime fleet and possessed a large overseas empire also. Yet, boating amidst us is not as wedded to any class of life as we find for instance in Kēraḷa or on the banks of the Ganges. No doubt we have hundreds of families of fishermen all along our coastal line, who sail out on their *catamaran* for mid-sea fishing. *Ēlālo-aiyalasa* is understood to be the refrain of boat songs. An investigation into the life of the fishermen folk is certain to yield a vast wealth of material on their folk-songs.

Pastoral Songs:

The major part of the Tamiḷ country is a pastoral area. Pas oral life has its own opportunities for the fuller enjoyment of life than most other types of life. There is more leisure, the struggle for existence is not as keen as elsewhere, and there is the satisfaction of the creation of wealth. Hence there is an abundance of folk-songs connected with the life of the farmers and the agriculturists. Usually it is the women folk that treasure songs and sing them on occasions of celebrations; but here we

find men also indulging in full-throated song. I shall mention here a few types of such songs.

Drawing water from the wells by means of mechanical contrivances and making the water flow through to the rice fields is an arduous task. As in other similar tasks here also several men are engaged in the work and all sing songs in chorus. The songs are known as the *yētrap-pāṭṭu*. They vary with the regions. They are so couched as to keep count of the number of balings. They begin with an invocation to Piḷḷaiyār, Ganēśa. Two or three men ride the picotta, shifting their weight from one end of it to other, while another man stands astride the well, dips the water basket and bales out the water. A few lines of song occupy the period of time from one dipping to another, and they conclude with the number one, two, three and so on up to one hundred; there are capable men, who can count several in the song. Another man is engaged in diverting the water along different channels to the different fields. The count of the buckets occuring in the course of the song indicates to the balers, the extent to which the water has flown, the occasion for the diversion of water and the time for stopping the work; they also indicate when the day's work is over or when they may take a lunch-break etc. Thus we find many elements—a time sense, a measure of work done, a rhythm in the work, and bond of unity—all in-built in the song. It is sad to note that with the mechanization of irrigation through oil engines and electric power, a death-knell has been rung on all such song activity and on all such human touch.

The *Naḍavuppāṭṭu* on the other hand is one sung by women. *Naḍavu* is the transplantation of rice seedlings. This work engages a large number of working-class women from the early hours of the morning till late in the afternoon. A leader of the group recites a song which is taken up by the entire group in chorus, or sometimes followed up with something like *tannana tanēnanna.* Being women, these people extemporize the songs and include there-in scenes and problems from their own life. There is a characteristic song actually heard and recorded from a village near Kāraikkāl, which is a mirror of the happy relationship which existed

then between the land-owner and the tiller of the land, quarter of a century ago. She sings:

> இந்திரனை நோக்கி எடுத்தேன் திருகலகு
> சந்திரனை நோக்கிச் சார்த்தினேன் திருகலகு
> எடுத்த திருகலகு இருந்து பயிர்ஏறவேணும்
> சாத்தினதும்கலகு சார்ந்து பயிர் ஏறவேணும்
> நெல்லா விளையவேணும்—நெடுங்களங்கள் ஏறவேணும்
> கதிரா விளைய வேணும்—எங்களையா
> களஞ்சியங்கள் ரொம்பவேணும். 14

The woman who is doing the seedling transplantation work desires not that she may get more, but prays that her master's granaries may be full. She is so sure that when his granaries are full, he will give her unstintingly and she will ever be above want. We find here the spirit of the *Puṛanānūṛu* dictum—the use of wealth is to distribute it (செல்வத்துப் பயனே ஈதல்)—in practice; it is here endorsed by the humble receiver in such confident terms. What a sharp contrast to the concept of modern oft-advertised paper-socialism, which is merely a levelling by enactment, with no giving and no joy of giving; what a far cry from the strikes and grabbings and the plumberings we find today!

Social Functions:

Social functions in the family are an occasion for the singing of songs. *Nalaṅgu, lāli, oosal* and *ēsal* (ஏசல்) are some of the types of folk-songs associated with auspicious occasions like a wedding. Women generally participate in these songs. The *oosal* is found in *Silappadhikāram.* Here girls rock the swing *(oosal)* singing the praise of the rulers. The *oosal* in later days had come to be associated with temple functions. The deity is placed on a swing, it is rocked gently and songs are sung. Many literary *oosal* poems have been sung on this theme and they have acquired the status of a distinct *prabandha. Tiruvāchakam* has a *oosal prabandha,* the *Ponnūsal.* Many poems exist outside the literary field also. It is still the custom in our country to place the newly-married couple on a swing and rock it; a few young women sing the *oosal* song while rocking. The *oosal* songs take three forms—traditional folk-song, literary song and newly improvised

song. This is part of a social function where the entire assembly of guests enjoy the swing and, the song.

Esal (ஏசல்) is also a similar poem, where girls belonging to the bride's party and to the bridegroom's party try to ridicule the groom and the bride and then each party in turn, after the wedding ceremonies and *oosal* are over. This is an occasion for the expression of the vilifying and inventive capactiy of the women folk. This folk element had been later incorporated into the literary poems in the 17th century in the Paḷḷu poems, where the two wives of the *paḷḷan* who is the hero of the *paḷḷu* poems, use the form to rile at each other.

Another very vast source of folk-song material is the *oppāri* or lamentation. On occasions of the death in a family, women folk—relations and friends—gather together and give vent to their grief in loud lamentation, couched in poetic lines complete with rhyme and alliteration. This is called *oppāri* in modern language; but in the literature of the last five centuries, it has been known as the *pulambal,* which also means simply lamentation. The *pulambal* songs of St. Paṭṭinathār, Bhadragiriyār and some others of a later period are famous in literature; the *pulambal* is always a couplet with four feet to the line. The *Ennāḷkaṇṇi* of Tāyumānavar is also on the same theme.

A careful study of the modern *oppāri* will give us an insight into the life of the community in general and the family in particular, their aspirations and failures, their petty quarrels and their joys, besides their customs and manners. They also reveal the remarkable wit and the keen edge of their sarcasm and humour, the intelligence and the capacity for quick repartee of the women folk. We shall give here one illustration.

An old woman died after a short illness. Her daughter-in-law had been nursing her well during the illness. Her daughter was living elsewhere, at considerable distance from the place of death. When word was sent to her about her mother's illness, she hastened to her mother's bed-side but could not reach her before her death. She was angry with her sister-in-law for not sending

word to her, much earlier. On the arrival of the daughter, the daughter-in-law poured forth afresh her lamentation, *oppāri.* She pointed out that in spite of all the diligent and solicitous nursing on her part which included the feeding of milk in a silver jug, the mother-in-law could not survive.

வெள்ளி சொம்பாலே வேளைபால் வார்த்தேனே !

Quick came the angry daughter's retort in the form of an allegation; "How you thirsted, out of an all-consuming hunger even for a little gruel." The moment the words of the first women entered the ears of the second, out came the retort, couched in matching rhyme and alliteration, and pregnant with biting sarcasm, sharp like a thrust.

கொள்ளிப் பசியாலே கூழுக்கலைந்தாயே !

This kind of *oppāri* is still being sung among all classes of the people and they are a mine of information on the life of the community concerned. *Oppāri* songs are always very long, given to limitless lines.

Songs for the Children:

Equally varied, profuse and revealing the life of the community are the *tālāṭṭu* songs. If the lament songs are born on occasions of grief, the *tālāṭṭu* songs are born out of immense joy and rejoicing. *Tālāṭṭu* is lullaby. In rural life the birth of a child in a family was a social event; it was not merely an event for the family; the entire society rejoiced at the new arrival. On the tenth day (or the fifteenth day in some groups) the new born baby is placed in the cradle; its mother rocks the cradle; not only its mother, but its grandmother and many grandmothers who had a full and happy life, and young ladies as well, participate in the singing. 'Placing in the cradle' is a celebration. The song goes on endlessly into a number of couplets. The first is the refrain and it is pregnant with profound philosophical significance:

ஆராரோ ஆரிவரோ—என்
கண்ணுறேரா ஆரிவரோ.

'Who are we, the mother and the father? Who is this baby, this darling?' The line contains the essence of Hindu philosophy. Two quite unrelated beings have been here united together in wed-lock by divine will and now this child, quite unrelated to either of them, is born as their offspring as a result of previous *karma* and through divine will; such is the import of the lines. All other sentiments can be found in the lines that ensue. This reminds us of the verse in *Kuṛuntogai,* where an young woman, happily united to her lover, sings out of an abundance of joy:

யாயும் யாயும் யாராகியரோ ?
எந்தையும் நுந்தையும் எம்முறைக்கேளிர் ?
யாமும் நீயும் எவ்வழி அறிதும் ?
செம்புலப் பெய்ந்நீர் போல,
அன்புடை நெஞ்சம் தாம்கலந்தனவே.

'Who is my mother and who is your mother? Were my father and your father related in any way? How do you and I know each other? Like the rains fallen on an even land, our hearts have united in love.'

The *tālāṭṭu* motif was first utilised for literary expression by Saint Kulasēkhara Āḻvār and Saint Periyāḻvār of the Vaishṇava Canon. Since their day, many literary figures have utilised the *tālāṭṭuppāṭṭu* to sing devotional thoughts and even philosophical truths. Scores of such poems both as folk-songs and as literary pieces are available today. The oral songs are still a mine of information on the life of the people, their joys and sorrows, their habits and customs, and their aspirations, in the various levels of society—both the high and the low, the learned and the illiterate.

The most important feature of the *tālāṭṭu* song, is its classical music, an element which is generally absent on all other types of folk songs, *Tālaṭṭu* is the song sung to induce the restive baby to go to sleep. (Tālu-tongue; *āṭṭu*-movement; *tālāṭṭu* means the moving of the tongue to make a trill sound which is considered soothing to the child.) Our elders had found in the past that the tune *nilāmbari* was best suited for this purpose. The singing

mother may not know any other musical tunes but when she sings the *tālāṭṭu* she always employs the *nīlāmbari* tune. It is the most soothing and even today it can be seen to lull the crying child into quiet slumber. *Tālāṭṭu* and *nīlāmbari* have now become synonymous. Among the *tālāṭṭu* songs, those on Muruga used in Abhinaya by Tirumathi Bālasaraswati a quarter of a century ago are the most famous. The songs were sung by her mother Tirumathi Jayammal for her dances; the simple music of the songs and the dance portrayal together lingered in the minds of the audience and haunted them for quite a long time. Hardly does any one know, that these songs were composed by the ascetic Chidambaraswāmi on Tirupporur Murugan. From a literary composition, the song had almost gone over to the realm of folk-song.

The *Māriamman tālāṭṭu* is sung in different versions. It is sung in the Mariamman temples by the *Pūjāris* to the accompaniment of small drum. It is not *tālāṭṭu* at all; it is a long poem singing the praise of the deity and praying to her to come down to the earth to bless the gathering and confer the boons prayed for. It is more of the ballad type.

Love Songs:

The theme of love, as between man and woman, occupied the greater part of early Tamil literature. *Poruḷ*, according to the *Iraiyanār kaḷaviyal* is the most important part in all the three parts—orthography, etymology and subject matter (*poruḷ*); of *poruḷ* again, *agapporuḷ* is the more important of the two *viz. agapporuḷ* and *puṟapporuḷ*. Thus love songs have been considered to be of greater value from the ancient times. The love theme has been adopted to great advantage by even the hymnists; their love poems are said to portray the *nayaka-nāyaki bhāva* where God is the lover and the devotee is the lady for His love. In folk-song however, the subtle requirements of the literary *bhāva* are completely absent; a little coarseness also comes into prominence here. The *temmāṅgu* poems are current in large volumes among the working class people and they portray the love episodes in an unrefined language. Many aspects of family life are also portrayed in them. There is

one familiar song being a lament of the lady who says that her husband does not love her as much as he used to do.

அத்தான் வந்தாரே—என்ன சொன்னாரு?
ஆற்றிலிருக்கிற பாகற்காயை அறுக்கச்சொன்னாரே
அறுத்து சிறுத்துப் பொரிச்சு வைச்சேன்,
குப்பை என்றாரே. 15

This reminds us of a song in *Kuṛuṅtokai* where the maid of the lady rebukes the lover for his neglect of the lady. In the first flush of their love, even bitter food given by her was sweet to him; now when the first flush of love has worn off, he does not appreciate even the sweet dishes offered by her.

The *temmāṅgu* songs, the *taṅgarāṭṭiṇam* songs and similar others are available in hundreds of couplets; all of them portay the love theme. They do preserve, unlike most other folksongs, the primitive and rustic pattern of the songs; the musical element often manifests itself in vulgar forms; but for all that, they have the true ring of spontaneity and self-expression. The volume of folk-songs on this theme is quite large, equalled only by that on the lullaby.

Patriotic Songs:

Patriotic or national songs need not be considered a novel feature of the 20th century. No doubt Bhārati was a great national poet of Tamiḻnāḍu and probably its greatest. But the element of patriotism has been present in the poetry of the past. *Kaliṅgattu-paraṇi*, a war poem of the 12th century may be considered to be a patriotic poem of the Choḻa period. Ballads of the type of *Desiṅgurājan kathai* and *Kaṭṭabomman kathai* are also later-day poems of the patriotic type. Two songs may be mentioned here to show that the theme of patriotism was also there in folk-songs One is a quotation embodied in the ballad *Alliarasāṇi mālai* (probably of the 17th century). This long ballad quotes a few lines placed in the mouth of the *kuṛatti* (gypsy) who reads the hand of Arjuna in the story.

She begins her song with these lines and goes on eulogising her and the Pāṇḍiya territory, in a dozen lines. These lines are in.

a metre different from the whole text and so, obviously it appears as a quotation taken from popular folk-song and incorporated into the ballad. The words of the gypsy here have been copied effectively by the *kuṛatti* who is the chief character in the *Kutrālakkuravañji*.

The other verse is the well known melon-song which bemoans the subjugation of the country by the foreigner;

ஊரான் ஊரான் தோட்டத்திலே
ஒருத்தன் போட்டானும் வெள்ளரிக்காய் அதைக்
காசுக்கு கொண்டு விற்கச்சொல்லிக்
காயிதம் போட்டானும் வெள்ளைக்காரன். 16

The sense of revolt and frustration under enslavement, underlying the song is quite obvious. This is one of several verses of the same type in the 18th century.

Social Reform:

The *Pāychalūrppadikam* is a well known folk-song in about ten verses, popular in the area around Madras at the turn of the century. The song is also found in manuscript in Trivandrum. A young Harijan girl marries a Brahmin youth. When the Brahmin elders oppose the marriage, the girl faces them with this song. She chastises them pointing out that mankind is essentially one species and that it is only man who had made the caste differences, just as toddy is not the fault of the palm tree; it gives out only fruit; but man makes it yield toddy, Caste is similar.

ஒருபனை இரண்டு பாளை ஒன்று நுங்கொன்று கள்ளூர்
அறிவினில் அறிந்தவற்கு அதுவுங்கள் ளிதுவுங்கள்ளே ;
ஒருகுலை உயர்ந்ததேதோ, ஒருகுலை தாழ்ந்ததேதோ?
பறையனைப் பழிப்பதேதோ, பாய்ச்சலூர் கிராமத்தாரே. 17

The poem might have come into existence by the 14th century. Along with *Kapilar akaval* which is also a spirited attack on caste differences, it has been a powerful force in advocating social reform. A careful study of this *padikam* and songs of Śiva Vākkiyar reveals the fact that he was probably the off-spring of the Brahmin boy and the Harijan girl.

Devotional Song:

There are many types of devotional songs which by virtue of their devotional appeal, emotional content, simplicity of diction and earnestness of language and expression, have passed into the folklore and folk-song of the people. Many songs from the Śaiva and the Vaishṇava canon may be cited as examples. The *Tiru Angamālai* of Appar appeals to each organ of the human body to dwell on Śiva. The song of Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār beginning '*Tiruttāiē sembothē*' (திருத்தாய் செம்போத்தே) calls upon the pheasant, the cock, crow, *kuyil*, parrot, lizard and some others to obtain the grace of Vishnu. Scores of songs in *Tiruvāchakam* have had the same appeal. The songs of Paṭṭinathār spurning the riches and the pleasures of the world and voluntarily taking up a life of total renunciation, the songs of Aruṇagirināthar with their highly assonant language and lilting rhythmic metre, the songs of Tāyumānavar and of Rāmaliṅgar have all passed into the folk-song of the people. With the passing of time, the authorship of some songs has been forgotton and they are handed down from generation to generation orally, only through recitation. Rāmaliṅgar has employed a large number of folk-song patterns and motifs and this element has earned for him a permanent place in the singing of the folk-songs. The *kummi* and the *kīrttanai* form have been exploited by him with remarkable effect. The *Kandar-sasht kavacham*, a composition of no great poetic merit, is an instance of a literary piece becoming a folk-song piece. Bharati has written innumerable devotional songs all modelled on the folk-song pattern taken from the Siddhas, from Tāyumānavar and Rāmaliṅgar.

Innovations:

A survey of folk-songs will not be complete without a reference to two outstanding innovations of the last century. The *Kiḷikkaṇṇi* and the *Kāvaḍichindu* have become classics the moment they were composed, and have passed so widely into popular use that we are tempted to class them even as folksongs. They are on the border line between classics and, folk-song and the propriety of calling a new composition as either may well be questioned. The *Kiḷikaṇṇi* is addressed to the parrot; it consists of 108 couplets

on Muruga, pouring forth the yearning of a love-sick maiden. The other, the *Kāvaḍichindu* by Annāmalai Reddi is also on Múruga. Though the two poems are quite modern, they are on the lips of every one, scholars and layman, men and women, *bhaktas* and others. Lay people may even term them folk-songs—such is their quaint appeal. Both the form and the expression in the two poems are most original. The *kāvaḍichindu* as its name suggests was intended to be sung by devotees when they carried a *kāvaḍi* of offerings to Muruga on their shoulders, trekking long distances. The singing of the songs helped them to overcome the tedium of the treks. This was sung on Muruga enshrined at Kaḷugumalai.

It had become a regular feature in later days to praise the spiritual preceptors in song. The songs also are sung on the hymns sung particularly in the Vaishṇava canon. They are known as *taniyan.* Though they are not folk-songs, we find they have been composed with the object eulogising preceptors and are sung by the followers of the particular groups of disciples. Hence we may consider them to be folk-songs of the devotional type.

Just as we say "Attention!" in physical education parades, songs to the same effect had been composed and sung, calling to attention the disciples and devotees when the image of the Lord is taken out in procession. Such songs are known as *Kaṭṭiyam* and *echcharikkai.* Similarly many songs composed in praise of deities are intended to remind the bhaktas of the mount of the Lord on each festive day (called *vāhanakkavi*) and of similar purposes.

Poetry of the Folk-Songs:

Folk-songs need not mean mere verse without any poetic quality. Folk-songs had been born at times of great emotion be they, love, joy or sorrow and, had indeed taken artistic forms. The singers or the original composers might have been uneducated but the legacy of good poetry had been there. The words in the songs might take ungrammatical forms; but the sentiment and the expression had been quite poetic and the pieces are good poetry by any standards. The *oppāri* lines quoted in the beginning with the

phrase 'வெள்ளி சொம்பாலே' for instance, may be cited as a piece of very good poetry. The sentiment is there, the words, the rhyme and the alliteration all together make the expression most forceful and the most lyrical in quality. Many similar instances can be quoted. I shall be content with quoting a pair of lines from a *tālāṭṭu.*

A family had been childless for a long time. It seemed as though that particular family and the tribe it represented were about to become extinct. Just at that time, the young women of the house conceived and in due course, she had a baby. As she was rocking the child in the cradle, thoughts of her recent past flit across her mind. Her family roots were drying up; the leaves were drying up and the plant also was withering. Just at the crucial moment, by God's Grace came the baby like a sweet jackfruit of the most superb quality. The jack-tree sheds all its leaves and appears as though it is completely withering; but no, just at that time, it bears a large and luscious fruit. The mother once despondent and frustrated, is now proud and overflowing with happiness in the possession of the child to continue the progeny. Out of this pride and joy comes the *tālāṭṭu* song.

இலை தீர்ந்து கொடியாடி
இல்லை என்று போமிடத்தே
சருகுதிர்ந்துப் பழம் பழுத்த
சாதிப் பலாப் பழமோ,

To her the child is like the sweet jackfruit, borne by the ancient tree when all its leaves had fallen and when it looked as though it was drying up. Her happiness over-flows and this is reflected in the song giving it a true poetic quality.

The Singers:

Though the songs are called folk-songs, i.e. songs sung by the common folk, they are being sung by other folk also. We have seen how little boys and girls sing songs in their play and pastime. Men and women engaged in hard labour have been singing the songs. The higher class people, mostly women, sing the songs during social functions. Death the leveller, makes the lamentation

song the common property of all, rich and poor alike. Wandering beggars and devotees keep alive a large number of ancient folk-songs. Disciples of spiritual heads sing some types of songs. The singers vary with the regions. Agricultural labourers and other classes of the labourers are peculiar to each region and, they sing different types of the songs. Besides, social customs vary and they call forth different types of songs. The marriage functions in the country call forth many songs which are not found in other regions. The *kolaṭṭam* in schools and temples are varied in the manner of playing and the songs are correspondingly varied and original.

We have to guard against one particular tendency in collecting and studying folk-songs. There is a tendency in modern days to compose new songs and pass them off effectively, as old ones. The time spent on studying them all is a waste. In modern days we have other avenues like the printed book, the newspapers and the like, which throw considerable light on contemporary life. For this purpose we need not go to such spurious folk-songs. Again, these songs contain many names of modern persons, Indian and foreign, places, objects etc; and they also employ many corrupt forms and phrases from the modern spoken tongue. We can as well study them from the spoken tongue straightaway; we need not go in for spurious folksongs for this purpose. A study of the folksongs is made, to understand the life of society and its ambitions and goals in the past; for the purpose, such folksongs are absolutely no guide. We should stop with admiring the glib expression and the facile language which has made even modern terms look like old folk-songs.

The scope for future collections:

Percy MacQueen, an I. C. S. Officer of the Madras State collected a large volume of the folksongs, which plantation workers were singing, in the latter half of the 19th century. He had not had access to the songs in use in the middle class or the higher classes. A selection from his collection, comprising about 2600 couplets, has been published by the Thanjāvur Sarasvati Mahāl

Library in 1958. Besides, an interest in folklore and folk-songs has been growing from the middle of the 20th century. Many enthusiasts have published some collections of folksongs, the major part of them being lullaby songs.

In the course of this discussion it has been pointed at various stages that the modern civilisation and the regimentation of life and mechanization of all crafts has reduced human enterprise, thereby reducing opportunities for self-expression. Agriculture, games and entertainments have all become mechanical now, shutting out joy in work. The advent of the cinema as a source of entertainment has completely removed self-expression through natural dance and music. When a whole community was thrown on its own resources for entertainment, the folk's facilities for art had a full play and the need for improvisation brought out latent talents in all persons and gave them, not only joy in expression but also pride and satisfaction in one's own effort. All this has been fully wiped out. Entertainment has come to be measured in terms of rupees and paise, instead of by individuals and self-effort.

But yet there is some scope, and some field is still open for the enthusiasts. Several activities still exist which employ a considerable amount of folk talent. The *yētram* and the *naḍavu* have not been ruled out; so long as these are practised by men, songs continue to be sung. So also grinding of lime-mortar. Temple renovations are done on a vast scale now. Sculptures on temple *vimānas* and towers continue to be done in lime mortar; they cannot be done in cement. These activities are all occasions for songs. *Oosal* and *ēsal* continue to be occasions of mirth-making during social functions. Devotees still flock to temples bearing the *kāvaḍi* on their shoulders. All these lend themselves to voluntary singing. Lamentation and lullaby as pointed out earlier, go on endlessly in the form of songs; they incorporate any number of events from life and both are an inexhaustible sources for folk-songs. Many other sources of folk-songs have dried up and one may get a glimpse of them only from enthusiastic and aged rural folk who may still be able to remember about their childhood days; perhaps in another decade these may cease to be available, with the dis-

appearance of such old people. But the other activities mentioned here will continue to exist for a long time to come and will be able to throw up scores of valuable songs. The tragedy here however, is that the men and women who sing the songs gradually give up their older songs and take up new songs from the cinema, thinking that they are more fashionable; the truth of this statement will be apparent if one just listens to one or two songs sung by *nari-kuṟava* children while begging on railway platforms.

TRANSLATION

1. The six schools of philosophy were self-evolved. O my fickle mind, will you consider and tell me where they are all integrated?

2. I was residing in the womb; I was then born in the place called non-existence; I do not know the Vēdanta path leading to the place called Truth. If I know this path of Vēdanta leading to Truth, will not all the births (wombs) become void, my Kaṇṇamma?

3. Dance, O peacock, dance saying Ādisēsha!

4. Dance, O peacock, dance that Ārumukha the Lord of Taṇikai may arrive. Dance to the singing of the devotees, dance that the Supreme young Guha may arrive, mounting on you.

5. O my mind, do not commit any sin; if you do, Yama the God of Death will seize you.

6. A hermit in the flower garden prayed to the Potter during months four—and—six and got a pot. But he danced and dropped shattering it to pieces.

7. Dance O you, serpent, dance out of serenity. Dance that we have a glimpse of the Feet of Śiva.

8. O serpent that is on the crown of the Lord, that has the poison pouch! O serpent that inhabits the nether world, sing and dance.

9. O Kutambai (child having the ear-pendant), where is the need for the coconut juice to the Lord who is seated on the hillock, drunk with the mango juice!

[This verse is in an esoteric language. Māṅgāy (mango) is the Brahman; its juice is the spiritual experience; the hillock is the state of Samadhi (or the contemplative oneness). Coconut juice merely represents the worldly experience. The meaning is that, to one who is capable of attaining oneness with the Brahman, things of the flesh do not matter].

10. This is the portal the ever flourishing one, the one which is praised from Kāsi to Kanyākumari.

11. The Lord that mounts the blue peacock, The one that wields the lance with the long broad tip! The warrior that has the beautiful cock in his banner!

The one with twice six shoulders and six countenances, and feet adorned with little sounding bells, which the scriptures praise! The great Preceptor who expounded to the satisfaction of Śiva Himself the meaning of the Praṇava which the creator did not understand!

12. Why does the caletropsis leaf fall? Why does the buffalo calf die? Because there is no sap (milk).

13. The Lord and Yama came as the Cow and the Calf, along the glorious streets of Ārur. But when they came like this, will the Cow give at least a spoonful of milk? No, how will the cow that kicked the calf give any milk? (This refers to the legend of the kicking of Yama God of death by the Lord Śiva at Tiru-Kaḍiyur).

14. I lifted up a seedling, bowing to Indra, and planted it bowing to Chandra (moon.)

Let the seedling grow luxuriantly and yield profuse paddy, filling the centre threshing floor.

Let it grow into limitless sheaves of grain filling all the granaries of our master.

15. What did the bride-groom say?
He asked me to cook the bitter gourd
from the river bed.
I cooked it and served him;
he cried this is rubbish!

16. Some fellow here cultivated some melons in his garden; but the foreign ruler issued an order asking him to sell then at two for a paisa!

17. The palm has two spathes—one gives fruits while the other gives toddy.

To the discerning both are toddy. How can one be superior and the other inferior?

O ye people of Pāychalur, who do you blame the pariah!

ARUṆAGIRINĀTHAR

BY

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Muruga is the God of the Tamils. He is the Kārthik of North India. The popularity of this Lord in Tamiḻ Nāḍu and the intense devotion with which he is worshipped in this part of the country is to be witnessed to be believed. The God-head of this cult is the product of the synthesis of the numerous traditions, Tamiḻ, Vēdic Non-Aryan and Middle East.[1] The Muruga cult is a living faith. A galaxy of spiritually surcharged souls have extolled Muruga's greatness in innumerable songs and the foremost amongst them is Aruṇagirināthar. His musical compositions are sung in temples and in homes with spiritual ecstasy. His songs are used in congregational singing of the Bhajan type in Tamiḻ Nāḍu.

Like Shakespeare whose universality of mind is known through his dramas but whose personal life remains a riddle, Aruṇagirināthar's rhythmic compositions are known to all Hindu Tamils but his life story lingers still in the realms of uncertainty.

There is no village in Tamiḻ Nāḍu where his songs *Tiruppugaḻ* are not rendered into music and sung with zeal. He has been the foremost in popularising the cult of Muruga. He lifted the God of the hills and placed Him in the homes of all Hindus—both Śaivites and Vaishnavites. Even Vaishnavites known for their indifference to the cult of Śiva, do not hesitate to offer worship at Muruga's, for the child God is the son-in-law of their Vishnu.

Everyone is agreed on the date of Aruṇagirināthar's period viz., fifteenth century. But still scholars are divided on the

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1. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri. 1962-65. *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, Madras, *Murugan*, p. 122 ff.

identification of the King Praudha Dēvarāya mentioned in *Tirup-pugaḷ* (*1056*).[2] Two Vijayanagar kings of the name Devarāya have ruled South India. Of the two, the first is Devarāya I (A. D. 1406–1422) and the other his grandson Devarāya II (A. D. 1422–1447). It is known from inscriptions that the son of Devarāya II who reigned between 1447–1465 as Mallikārjunarāya was known as Praudha Devarāya and further Padearao who succeeded Virupaksha II (1485 A. D.) to the throne of Vijayanagar empire is also called as Praudha Devarāya. Considering the internal evidence and the state of affairs of the country described in *Tiruppugaḷ* which will be referred to a little later, the identification of Praudha Devarāya with Padearao as the one mentioned by Aruṇagirināthar seems to be on surer grounds.

The taste of court held sway in matters relating to all forms of arts, be they literary, plastic, pictorial, fine and rhetoric. Vijayanagar rulers like Devarāya II were great patrons of letters and music. Sanskrit learning, sophisticated and popular music have been very much patronised. It was during this period that the *Tamil Chintu* developed into *Keertanai*. These musical compositions came to be known as *vakuppu* and Aruṇagirināthar has made this popular. This is a new form of poetic art, where poesy aed music, are found fused. The rhyme scheme (çantam) to be followed was 1008 permutations and combinations of a basic 24 varieties.[3]

The total number of Aruṇagirināthar compositions is said to exceed 16,000 and considering its literary and philosophic content and the musical forms, it makes us believe that he should have had a great academic background and years of discipline under preceptors in music. But the internal evidence in his poems makes us believe that his stupendous mastery over literary and musical arts is due to the grace of Muruga.

2. V. T. Subramaniya Pillai (Ed) 1926, *Tiruppugaḷ* Vol. I to III, Madras. This number refers to *Tiruppugaḷ* published in the 3 volumes of this edition.

3. V. T. Subramaniya Pillai, *Op. cit.* Vol. III, *Tiruppugaḷ*, *Cantakkuṟippu*. p. 3 ff.

Knowledge, eternal verities, unlimited profane sciences,
You revealed Oh! Lord in split-second.[4]

Nevertheless, internal evidence also disclosed that he was well-versed in *Tēvāram*, *Tirumantiram*, *Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḍai*, *Tirukkuṟal*, *Kārikai*. He had mastered the rendering of verses in the forms of *ulā*, *ēsal*, *kalambakam*, *kōvai*, *chintu*, *tūtu*, *paraṇi*, *matal*, *mālai*. Kāmasūtras he knew well. He possessed also the gift of composing poems extempore.[5]

In his poems we find innumerable references to Philosophy, Purāṇas, Gods, Goddesses, sacrifices and Vēdic lore. For many it would be difficult to accept the statement that the versatility of Aruṇagiri was due to the transformation the Lord brought about in him in a split-second. It is here that the theory propounded by M. Raghava Iyengar that Aruṇagiri belonged to a Brahmin family known for erudition is to be seriously thought of.[6] Raghava Iyengar considered the place of his boyhood days as Mullandiram and that he is one of the *Tinḍima Kavis* who lived in that village. *Tinḍima* is a musical instrument which these poets used while singing extempore compositions known for their literary value and philosophic content. Aruṇagirināthar in later Sanskrit works is referred to as [*Sarvabouma Tinḍimākavi* and *Ashtabāsha Paramēśvara*. Again at Tiruççendūr, Pagaḷikūthar who sang a *Pillaiṭ Tamiḻ* on Subramaṇya refers to in two places, a poet singing the praise of the Lord at that place with *Tinḍima* in hand.[7] Later at Mullandiram an inscription of 1550 A. D. spoke of a Brahmin lady building a sanctum for Aṇṇamalaināthar (evidently Aruṇagiriyār was also known thus). This lady should have been a descendent of Aruṇagiri.[8]

Aruṇagiri was an erudite scholar both in Sanskrit and Tamiḷ. However, his desire was to be a master of the Tamiḷ language

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4. *Tiruvakuppu* 12.
5. V. S. Cengalvaraya Pillai, 1947, *Aruṇagirināthar*, Madras. p. 2.
6. M. Raghavaiyengar, 1961, *Sāsanattamiḻkavi Caritam*, Manamadurai, p. 135 ff.
7. Pagaḷikkūtar: *Piḷḷaittamiḻ*, *Cappāni 2*, *Ciruparai 4*.
8. M. Raghavaiyengar, 1961, *Op. citi*, p. 137.

which he called as *Teḷḷu Tamiḻ* (619, 1290) (faultless Tamiḻ) *Eḻisai Tamiḻ* (499) (musical Tamil) *Canda Tamiḻ* (860) (rhythmic Tamiḻ) *Sutta Tamiḻ* (619) (pure Tamiḻ) *Taṉ Tamiḻ* (704) (Tamiḻ with grace) and *Teṟi Tamiḻ* (592) (Tamiḻ with clarity).

Several anecdotes of his early life are related, one is that he led a life a libertine. It is unbelievable that a Saint of the order of Aruṇagiriyār was in the company of wanton woman and only gave it up at the instance of his elder sister under whose fostering care he grew up from his childhood. Chid by her, he ran to the tower of Tiruvaṇṇamalai and while making a straight jump down to commit suicide he was halted by the Muruga Himself and from thence a metamorphosis took place in his life.

This story ought be an oral tradition later embedded with literary flourish in the works of later authors. Nevertheless, the many references to women, their forms, gait, dress and other viles attributed to them which were replete in *Tiruppugaḻ* makes one wonder whether the stories about Aruṇagiriyār were real. A closer study of these internal evidences (493, 562, 568, 609, 833, 1023, 1054, 1197, 1276) lead one to entertain doubts of his morality also. Aruṇagiriyār's numerous references to the gullible temptations provided by the womenfolk were a portrayal of his times. The Vijayanagar Kings Virupaksha II (1465—1485 A.D.) and Padearao (Praudha Dēvarāya) 1485 A.D. who succeeded him were solely responsible for a sorry state of affairs that prevailed in the court. Virupaksha II was known for his vices and cared for nothing but women. Almost the first act of his successor Prauda Dēvaraya after ascending the throne was the assassination of his brother. He abandoned himself to debauchery.[9] No wonder their courts were filled with courtesans and it was during this period that the noble custom of dedicating women to the temples and the role the *patiyiḷārs* played in the temple were abused. It became a status symbol for the courtiers to indulge in drunken ribaldry and promiscuous sex indulgence. Wanton women were taking advantage of the times and youths became gullible victims

9. A. Krishnaswami, 1964, *The Tamil country under Vijayanagar*: Annamalai University, Annamalainagar.

to their enticements. Historically, necessity made Aruṇagiri a product of the times to become the spear-head of a new campaign against sexual excessess and abuse of women dedicated to the temples. Almost about this time the essence of religion and the need for dharmic life was preached by Bammera Pōtana (1400—75 A.D.), Pillalmarri Pina Vīrabhadra Kavi Nandi Mallaya and Ghaṇṭam Singaya (1480.) Aruṇagirināthar portrayed in his poems the sorry state of affairs and asked the Lord to save the thousands of young men who fell victims to wanton women and prayed for His grace to restore them. A soul-stirring song of his seemed almost to serve as an internal evidence to the excesses in his own life. But one wonders whether it was an auto-biographical note or a mere reflection of his times of the poet:

Object of derisive laughter,
My wife, people, wantons did sneer,
Taunted by parents' words,
Frustrated, scolded by all
Enveloping gloom in mind,
Pensive each day at my own deeds,
You saved me from suicide, oh! Lord,
Grace me with another look of your feet. (392)

Several stories about Aruṇagirināthar are to be discounted. One such is the wordy duel between him and Srivilliputhūrār. The latter should have lived nearly half a century earlier than Aruṇagirināthar. So too, is his arguments with Sampanthāṇḍān. Sampanthāṇḍān was the head of a mutt, who lived in 1314 A.D. The account of the end of Aruṇagirināthar who transmigrated into a bird's body and finally gave himself up, is a canard built around certain expression found in *Tiruppugaḻ*, like "*suka sorūba*" and "*sukapāda*" in his *Tiruppugaḻ*. The word "*suka*" stands for the state of blissfullness and also for a parrot.

Aruṇagiri was initiated by Muruga Himself. (513—515, 550). He travelled extensively the length and breadth of Tamiḻ Nāḍu visiting Muruga shrines. A glimpse of his itinerary indicated that he never missed even the smallest of shrines where Muruga

appeared even as a *Parivāra* deity.[10] *Svayampradhāna* temples for the Lord were few and far between, in the 15th century. It is only after his period that a number of such temples and appeared all over Tamiḻ Nāḍu. Recently the *Svayampradhāna* temple at Delhi known as Uttara Swāmimalai is due to the efforts of Thiru A. S. Raghavan and other Muruga's devotees who sang regularly *Tiruppugaḻ* at Delhi.

Aruṇagiriyār visited most of the shrines and a list of them provides an insight into the spread over of Śaiva shrines in Tamiḻ Nāḍu and a comparison of this list with those eulogised by the earlier Nāyanmārs particularly the Tēvāram hymnites indicated the newer ones that had sprung up, during the eight centuries that had passed between Gñanasambanda and Aruṇagiriyār. It is not possible with certainty to follow the route he undertook in his pilgrimage. Nevertheless, the internal evidence in his poems by and large, disclosed the temple-groups he visited during one package programme. He often made reference to Vayalūr where he had once again, the darshan of the Lord Muruga in the inner recesses of his cosmic consciousness. This reference to Vayalūr helps us to sort out those temples visited by him prior or anterior to his visit to that place.

His Pilgrimage :

The first lap of pilgrimage[11] should have been from Tiruvaṇṇāmalai to Chidambaram covering on the way the following shrines :

1. Tirukkōvalūr (738), 2. Tiruveṇṇainallūr (748), 3. Tirunāvalūr (747), 4. Tiruvamur (744), 5. Vaḍugūr (745), 6. Tuṟiyūr (746), 7. Tiruvatigai (742, 743), 8. Tirupātirippuliyūr (749), 9. Tirumānikkūḻi (750).

From Chidambaram he sojourned to Sīrkāḻi visiting ten shrines :

1. Tiruvēṭkaḷam (751–752), 2. Nelvāyil (753) (Sivapuri), 3. Vriddāçalam (754-756), 4. Kudalaiyāṟṟur (760), 5. Erukkaṭampuliyūr (763), 6. Tirumuṭṭam (764–765), 7. Kaḍambūr (761), 8. Nallur (766), 9. Mayēntrappaḷḷi (767), 10. Sīrkaḻi (768–781).

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10. V. T. Subramaniya Pillai, *Op. cit.* Vol. III *Svamigaḷin caritra Ārāichi*-p. 13
11. V. S. Cengalvaraya Pillai, *Op. cit.* p. 24 ff.

Halting at Sīrkāḷi the birth place of Gñanasambanda, he commenced his third lap of visit to Tiruvārūr covering *enroute* twenty two shrines:

1. Kavirippūmpaṭṭinam, 2. Kariavānakar (782), 3. Tirumannip-paḍikarai (791), 4. Vaiteeśvarankōil (783–788), 5. Māyuram (792), 6. Ākkur (804), 7. Tirukkaḍavūr (789, 790), 8. Pagai (793–795), 9. Tiruviḍaikaḷi (796-803), 10. Tirupariyalūr, 11. Vaḷuvur (813–814), 12. Kandaṅkuḍi (805), 13. Tilaḍipaṭṭi (806, 808), 14. Ambar (809), 15. Ambarṁākalam (810), 16. Tiru-naḷḷāru (812), 17. Kaṇṇapuram (815), 18. Tirumarugal, 19. Tirucenkātaṅkuḍi (817), 20. Tiruviṛkuḍi (818), 21. Vijayapuram (819), 22. Tiruvārur.

Tiruvārūr was a sacred shrine of Śiva, a place where Manu Nēeti Cōla established the greatness of the dharma by attempting to execute a penal provision of death on his son by running over a chariot on him, till halted by the Lord of the place. He commenced the journey after a period of halt to Vēdaraṇyam. singing on the way songs on five shrines:

1. Sikkal (830-831), 2. Nāgapaṭṭinam (832–834), 3. Eṭtikkuḍi (835–838), 4. Vaḷivalam (842), 5. Vēdāraṇyam.

Vēdāranyam to Kumbakōnam was his next lap of pilgrimage, visiting on the way fourteen shrines:

1. Kōdikkuḷagar Koil (846), 2. Eṇkaṇ (838), 3. Kuḍavāyil (840–841), 4. Tiruvāñjiyam (816), 5. Triyambagapuram (829) 6. Kūnḍaḷur (878), 7. Tiruviḷimiḷalai (851), 8. Tiruvāvaḍuturai (852), 9. Tiruppaṅtanai Nallūr (854-860), 10. Marutuvaṅkuḍi (835), 11. Tiruviḍaimarutūr (863–865), 12. Tirubuvanam (866), 13. Tirupanaṅtāl (861), 14. Kumbakonam (867–874).

Aruṇagiriyār sang on nine shrines around Kumbakōnam and Swāmimalai presently also called Tiruvēragam. But a shrine Kumarakkoil near Nagerkoil equally claims the name.

1. Somēçuram (874), 2. Periamaḍam (827), 3. Āḍuturai (883–885), 4. Śivapuram (876), 5. Koṭtaiyūr (875), 6. Śaṭtimuṭtam (879), 7. Palaiyārai (881), 8. Tiruvalañjuḷi (880), 9. Tiruvēragam (195–232).

From Swāmimalai he travelled to Tiruççenkōḍu visiting on the whole nineteen shrines:

1. Kāvaḷur (886), 2. Tañjaimānagar (887-889), 3. Tiruvaiyāṛu (891), 4. Perumpuḷiyūr (895), 5. Tirupūnturuṭti (892), 6. Tiruneytānam (893), 7. Tiruppaḷuvūr (894), 8. Puvāḷur (924), 9. Tirumānturai (903), 10. Vālikanḍapuram (902), 11. Tirunelvāyil Aratturai (762), 12. Veppañcanti (759), 13. Kollimalai (388-389), 14. Tīrttagiri (399), 15. Kanagamalai (400), 16. Koṅgaṇagiri (398), 17. Sēlem (938), 18. Rājapuram (Rasipuram) (939), 19. Tiruçeṅkoḍu (367-387).

A trip to Tiruçeṅkōḍu to Tiruchi was long but he visited only four shrines:

1. Bhavāni, 2. Pāndikkoḍumuḍi (936-937), 3. Tirupparāituṛai (925), 4. Tiruchirāpaḷḷi (91).

Halting at Tiruchirapaḷḷi for a considerable length of time he visited 12 shrines and finally made a trip to Kaḍampanturai.

1. Vayalūr (904-921), 2. Uraiyūr, 3. Karkuḍi (345-346), 4. Tiruvānaikkā (495-508), 5. Tiruṭavattuṛai (922-923), 6. Tiruneduṅkalam (896), 7. Aṭṭipaṭṭu (899), 8. Aṭṭikkarai (900), 9. Kuṛaṭṭi (897-898), 10. Kaṅdanūr (901), 11. Virālimalai (350-365), 12. Koḍambālūr (955).

Kaḍambaṅtuṛai to Perūr was a long way off and *enroute* he had darshan of Muruga in fifteen shrines:

1. Kaḍambaṅtuṛai (926), 2. Ratnagiri (Vātpōkki) (347-349), 3. Sivāyam, 4. Karuvūr (927-933), 5. Neruvūr (934), 6. Veñjamākkūḍal (935), 7. Pugaḷimalai (401), 8. Sennimalai, 9. Vijayamaṅgalam (940), 10. Tirumuruganpūnḍi (946), 11. Avināśi (947-949), 12. Tiruppukkoliyur (950-952), 13. Kuraṭṭimalai (395), 14. Gñanamalai (391, 392), 15. Perūr (953-954).

The next journey of his was from Perūr to Paḷani where he stayed long and sung the largest number of songs on one temple.[12] He visited on the way eight shrines:

1. Eḷukarainādu (990), 2. Tensēriḳkiri (396-397), 3. Paṭṭāli—Śivamalai (943-945), 4. Siṅgai (941-942, 99), 5. Uthimalai (393-

12. 96 songs. M. Arunacalam, 1959, p. 10, *Tamiḷ Ilakkiya Varalāru*, Mayavaram.

394), 6. Kīranūr (956), 7. Āaikuḍi (982), 8. Paḻani (100–194, 1308).

Four shrines he visited on his way from Paḻani to Madurai.

1. Pūmpaṛai (402) (125), 2. Tirukuḷandai (Periakulam) (957), 3. Taniççayam (958–959), 4. Madurai (960–967, 969–971, 725).

From Madurai he proceeded to Tiruççenḍūr covering three shrines:

1. Tiruparaṅkuṅdram (2–15), 2. Paḻamudirçōlai (433–448) (572, 938), 3. Tiruççendūr (16–99).

It was either at Tiruççendūr or near that shrine that he is alleged to have encountered a poet Villiputtūrār (not to be confused with Villiputtur Aḻvar (Periaḻvar) father of Sri Āndaḷ). He visited two shrines around that place. 1. Sripurusha Maṅgai, 2. Vaḷḷiyūr and journeyed to Śri Laṅka.

At Śri Laṅka he visited three shrines:

1. Aruṅkōṇāmalai (431), 2. Tirukkōnamalai (432), 3. Kadirkāmam (418–430).

He returned from Śri Laṅka and proceeded to Potia hills (Papanāsam) and from there to Tirupperuṅturai. During this journey he visited twelve shrines of Muruga.

1. Potiamalai (412–413), 2. Couṛṛālam t979–981), 3. Ilañji (975–978), 4. Kaḻukumalai (414–416), 5. Tiruvuṭṭarakōśamaṅgai (936), 6. Ramēswaram (987–988), 7. Rajakembiravalanāḍu (390), 8. Tirupputtūr (983–984), 9. Vinayakamalai (366), 10. Pirānmalai (403–404), 11. Kundrakkuḍi (405–11), 12. Tiruperuṅtuṛai (847–49).

From Tiruperuṅturai to Tiruvaṇṇāmalai he visited and sang on six shrines.

1. Tirukkaḷar, 2. Peruṅkuḍi (704), 3. Iñjikkuḍi (811), 4. Cakkrappaḷḷi (882), 5. Tirunagēsvaram (877), 6. Tiruvaṇṇāmalai.

He commenced his northern pilgrimage after a lapse of time spent at his place. His first northern trip was to Kāñcīpuram visiting on the way ten shrines.

1. Ceñji, 2. Tiruvāmaṭṭūr (733–736), 3. Mayilam (328), 4. Peṛainagar (Perumbeṛu-726), 5. Iṅtambalam (989), 6. Vaḷavāpur. or Seyyū (725), 7. Madurāṅtagam (722–724), 8. Uttiramērūr (718–721), 9. Tirukaḷukundram, 10. Kāñcīpuram.

From Kāñcipuram he travelled to Vaḷḷimalai visiting twenty four shrines.

1. Tiruvōṭṭūr (681), 2. Vāgai (994), 3. Kāmaṭṭūr (992), 4. Vallakkōṭṭai (707–713), 5. Mādambākkam (705–706), 6. Tiruvañmiyūr (702), 7. Mayilappūr (692–701), 8. Tiruvoṛriyūr (690, 691), 9. Andārkuppam (737), 10. Siruvaiyal (729–732), 11. Kōsainagar (703), 12. Pādi or Tiruvaliṭāyam (689), 13. Vadatirumullaivāyil (686-688), 14. Tiruvērkādu (684–685) 15. Pākkam (682–683), 16. Palaiyanūr Tiruvālaṅkāḍu (677-680), 17. Muḷvāy (993), 18. Veppūr (757–758), 19. Dēvanūr (739–741), 20. Odukkaṭṭuceṛivāi (991), 21. Vēlūr (670–671), 22. Viriñjipuram (672–676), 23. Tiruvaḷam (669), 24. Vaḷḷimalai.

The Lord of Tiruṭṭaṇi made him go into raptures and cured him of his physical, mental, psychological ills which may have evidently left their traces on him. He extolled the Lord as Bhavarōga Vaithianātha (Healer of all ills).

On the way from Tiruṭṭaṇi to Śrisailam he visited four shrines :

1. Veḷḷikaram (660-668), 2. Tiruvēṅgaḍam (245–248, 1305, 1306), 3. Tirukkāḷaṭṭi (587–589), 4. Śrisailam (244).

In his North Indian trip he visited six shrines :

1. Kaśi (655–657), 2. Hariḍvār (Māyapuri (658), 3. Vayiravivānam 859),) 4. Tirukailai (238–243), 5. Jagannātham (198), 6. Viśu (Visakapaṭnam—995).

The works of Aruṇagiri include *Tiruppugal*, *Kaṅtaraṅtāti*, *Kaṅtaralaṅkāram*, *Kaṅtar Anupūthi* and *Tiruvakuppu*.

Tiruppugaḷ :

Aruṇagirināthar's poems have universally been acknowledged as poems of Truth. Of the prolific poems of Aruṇagiri's *Tiruppugaḷ*

stated to be 16,000 only 1304 have been and published.[13] Many more in old cadgeon leaves may have served as food for the moths. To appreciate his poems is to sing them, for, no meaningful understanding can be made of his words bereft of music supercharged in them.

All his verses were written with amazing skill and a great richness of musical note are fused in them with complex rhythms, intricate patterns of alliteration and rich rhyming. The music is enthralling and the devotee suddenly realises that he is singing along happily without the least notion of what is being sung.

Kantar Antāti :

Kaṇtar Antāti is a poem of hundred verses, written in a terse style, wherein the exhibition of the uniqueness of Tamiḻ grammar and the excellence of poetic expressions were the motive factors for composition. It is known as *Yamaga antāti*. It is compared to Mānikkavāçaka's *Tirukkōvaiyar*. The scheme of poesy though difficult to understand at first sight, provides, after an effort at discovering the meaning of words, a wealth of meaning. The poem eulogises the significance of the six spots sacred to Muruga and ends stating that the meditation of Tiruççendūr Muruga alone would be sufficient for emancipation.

Kantar Alankāram :

Kantar Alankāram is a work of esteem. Choice Tamiḻ words have been used and the style is mellifious. This song rendered to music is said to make one slip into a trance. The soulful songs seem to have been composed at the height of the poet's spiritual greatness.

Kantar Anupūti :

Kantar Anupūti is an epitome of Aruṇagiriyār's spiritual experience underwent. The moments of wakeful forgetfulness he experienced while slipping into cosmic consciousness, he brings out in

13. V. T. Subramaniya Pillai. *Op. cit.* Vol. III.

this poem. There is a controversy about the number of verses in this work. It should only be fifty one.[14]

Tiruvakūppū:

Tiruvakūppū is noted for its involution and distinctive style of poetry. It deals with the significance of Muruga's consorts—Dēvasēna and Vaḷḷi, Vēl his weapon, Peacock his vehicle and Chanticleer his banner.

The message of Aruṇagirināthar is reflected largely in his appeals to Muruga. These appeals reminds us of a *Paripaṭal* song[15] wherein the poet Katuvan Ilaveyinanar sought of Sevvēl (Muruga) not material things, wealth, nor pleasures of life but his grace, love, and dharmic life.

Aruṇagirināthar sought of the Lord only a few things as the *Paripātal* poet. Though the requests seemed simple, if obtained, would mould our life into a spiritual selfless soul finally emancipated and released from the cycle of births and deaths. His requests are listed below:

1. Not to while away time but to spend it in praising the Lord's Glory. (66)
2. The six lettered mantra ever to remember. (326)
3. To love all generally and Him specifically. (672)
4. Be of service to Lord's Bhaktas. (245)
5. To be free from illness. (260)
6. To be rid of ego. (739)
7. Muruga should always provide basic needs. (834)
8. To be reminded of Muruga's sacred feet and His image on the Peacock Vāhana at the time of death. (1242)
9. To be rid of temptations. (1257)
10. Not to be worried of possessions; in fact to be without a thought of them. (1291)
11. To be released of the cycle of births and deaths. (1204)[16]

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14. P. K. Shanmuganathan, 1 967, *Kantar Anuputi*, Madras.
15. *Paripātal* No. 5.
16. V. S. Cengalvaraya Pillai, *Op. cit.* p. 226.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ARUṆAGIRINĀTHAR

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The word 'philosophy' may be understood in different senses. Here we shall take it in the sense of a search for knowledge, especially, of the nature and meaning of existence and as a way of life resulting from such a search. There may be objections to philosophy on several grounds *e. g.* (1) that there is no meaning in existence, especially human existence since it is like 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury but signifying nothing', (2) that even if there is meaning, it may be different for different persons; (3) that the meaning is beyond human understanding and a search for it is an exercise in futility. Who is Aruṇagirināthar any way, that we should bother to study his philosophy of life?

No effective reply can be given to a person who with or without some thinking has come to the conclusion that there is no meaning in existence; that 'existence', just happens to be — that is all there is to it. 'Why without bothering hither hurried whence? And without bothering whither hurried hence? Another and another cup to drown the memory of this impertinence', as the Omar Khayam has it. But this impertinence has a way of putting its head up. It is irrepressible. The objection that the meaning may be different for different persons is not without force. But it is not unhelpful to know how others have understood life. We may get hints from their lives as to what to follow and what to avoid. Their lives may serve as models or warnings. No doubt, one has to use one's discretion in drawing lessons from the lives of others for one's own guidance. As to

who Aruṇagirināthar is that we should seek to know his philosophy of life, the answer is that he was a man of great compassion, born Circa 1475 A.D. in Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. Has his philosophy any relevance for us today? Yes. It has great relevance indeed for any age, for his view of life is a total one. He has taken into consideration the major problems of life and given us his clear answer. Either he has himself gone through all the experiences that he records in his songs or he has the genius to know those of others as if they were his own experiences. Hence the view he presents is a full and fair one.

Tradition says that Aruṇagirināthar was profligate in his youth. Losing health and wealth, he found his life miserable. He sought to put an end to his life by jumping from the tower of the local temple. Murugan (Subraḥmaṇya) appeared before him. At His touch Aruṇagirināthar felt healed in body and spirit. The Lord commanded Aruṇagirināthar to sing His praises giving the first line Himself. Tradition has it that Aruṇagirināthar sang 16000 songs in a unique style. Of these songs known as the *Tirruppugaḻ*, barely a thousand three hundred and odd have survived. There are other compositions of Aruṇagirināthar. They are *Kandaralaṅkāram, Kandarandādi, Kandaranubhūti,* and the *Tiruvaguppu.*

When a seed is sown, the expectation is that the sprout in the fullness of time will yield grains. If we have mere husks without grains in them, the crops have verily failed. Aruṇagirināthar evidently has this picture in his mind when he prays to the Lord, 'Grant that my life may not become a mere husk'. In other words, his prayer is 'to have life and to have it more abundantly'. Here is one song which with a few words draws a highly suggestive picture:

> Filled with unceasing great greed, unable to speak the truth
> Associating myself with women and contracting diseases,
> Here I am a low dog—

Spending my time in vain and noisy pedantry.
Grant that my life may not become a mere husk.[1]

When a person is filled with unceasing greed his sight is powerfully distorted. He is unable to see life steadily and see it whole. He does not see the truth of life and speak it for the benefit of others and of himself. The result is misadventure, often tragic, at various levels. Aruṇagirināthar traces life from its commencement as a sperm through all stages of growth, pre-natal and post-natal, to its decline and death. Indeed for the benefit of those who may take him at his word, Aruṇagirināthar extends the history in two directions, past and future. Countless like the sands on the shores of the seven seas have been previous births and countless in the future they will be—if we do not make good the golden opportunity for reclamation offered by this life. Human life is to be welcomed and used as an opportunity for overcoming the cycle of births and deaths. Unfortunately, most persons fail to realise this truth. They live a sense-bound life. Their time and energy are employed in gratifying the senses. One has to eat in order to live nobly. But this is forgotten and eating is treated as an end in itself. Aruṇagirināthar time and again calls our attention to our duty to feed others before we sit down for our meal. This means that we should acquire by honest means, enough and more to give to others before we attend to our own needs. He describes those who rush out of their houses in order to drive away any one about to enter them to ask for help. Our duty is to render to others such help as they may require, not to refuse to do so nor even to ask others for help. He adds an important rider. 'When you help others, do so in the name of the Lord'. This is valuable advice in as much as even charitable acts done with a sense of one's own agency promote egoism. Extending the scope of this advice, we realize that we have to train ourselves to lead a righteous life without cultivating self-righteousness.

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1. பேரவா அருவாய்மை பேசற்கறியாமே
பேதைமா ரொடுங்கூடிப் பிணிமேவா
ஆரவார மாருத நூல்கற்றடி நாயேன்
ஆவிசாவி யாகாமல் நீசற்றருள்வாயே—1033.

There is yet another reason why we should use, whatever property we possess and acquire, for charitable causes. It is the characteristic of material wealth not to stay with any one indefinitely. So to say, it is a 'restless traveller'. It is folly to treat it as 'a permanent member' of our family and try to keep it for ourselves and our successors. Nor can we take it with us beyond our grave. More importantly, it tends to corrupt us if we do not have the right attitude to it. It makes us feel proud and superior to others. Moreover it can also make us misers by making us treasure it for its own sake, instead of using it as a means for the happiness of others. Trying to possess material wealth for ourselves, we end up by being possessed by it!

Those who go through Aruṇagirināthar's works will notice his frequent and strong denunciation of women who try to seduce men with their physical charms and alluring ways. Is it an obsession or hang-over from his earlier licentious life? It is necessary to realise that Aruṇagirināthar was no hater of women because of his unfortunate experiences earlier with some of them—assuming the correctness of the traditional account of his life. He is trying to save men and women alike from a gross misuse of the sex instinct. Sex, like the appetite for food, is a basic need in most persons. However, there is an important difference. The appetite for food has its limits. It cannot lead to such enormous over-indulgence as will harm oneself and others. Not so the sex instinct in human beings. Whereas the animals have a mating season, human beings do not seem to have any restrictions at all in their enjoyment of sex. Tragically, the craving for sex may survive as an obsession even after failure of physical powers. Considering all the dangers inherent in sex, Aruṇagirināthar tries to teach human beings two important lessons: one is to keep sex within the bounds of morality as a sacred part of the householder's life. The other is to rise above and beyond sex. An easy way to do this is to contemplate the Sacred Form of the Lord and of His Consorts. Purified by beholding the Divine Consorts of the Lord, we shall come to realise the divinity in all women.

Down the ages humanity has tried vainly to find in sex a source of lasting happiness. Saints and Śages have equally persistently taught us all along that sex, can never be an end in itself. It is possible and necessary to sublimate sex.

In consonance with the *ahapporūl* literature in Tamiḻ, Aruṇagirināthar commends bridal mysticism as an easy way of achieving union with the Lord. He calls it *Vaḷḷī Sanmārgam.* He identifies this with the meaning of the sacred *praṇava* which Murugan revealed to His Father. According to the *purāṇa,* Vaḷḷi (symbolic of the *jīvātma*) was longing for union with the Lord. She had no thought for anyone but Murugan. Murugan goes seeking Her and finding her inflexible in Her resolve to marry Him weds her. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* says that with the help of the *praṇava* as a bow, the *jīvātma* (the arrow) is to be shot into the *Paramātma* (the target). *Cf.* the following, in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*: That mystic syllable *Om* (*praṇava*) is the bow. The arrow is the soul (*ātman*). Brahman is said to be the mark (*lakṣya*). By the undistracted mind it is to be penetrated. One should come to be in It, as the arrow (in the mark).[2] Valli Sanmārgam is a more concrete way of interpreting the *praṇavam.* Aruṇagirināthar incidentally shows the excellence of Tamiḻ language as a potent means for God-realization. This is not surprising as he identifies Tirujñānasambandhar with Murugan. Tirujñānasambandhar, it will be recalled, made his Tamiḻ songs a strong and sure means of salvation. Aruṇagirināthar praising Tamiḻ as beyond the ken of even the celestials, says that it gives the cream of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad.*[3] Presumably *ahapporuḷ* literature in Tamiḻ has for its end and aim the consecration and consummation of human love in divine love. We may note in this connection another song in *Tiruppugaḻ* wherein Aruṇagirināthar sings, 'Never shall I forget Your look transmuting my leaden life into gold and ordaining

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2. *L. E. Hume : The Thirteen Principal Upanisads.*

3. ... .அண்டர்க
ளறியா முத்தமிழூட்டி முண்டகத்
தளிர் வேதத்துறை காட்டி 814

that by Tamiḻ in its threefold aspect (Muttamiḻ) devotees shall attain the supreme goal'.[4]

Our preoccupation with physical appetites for food and sex blinds our vision. More insidious in its deleterious influence is the craze for power through possession of material wealth and positions of authority. While material wealth generates a feeling of self-sufficiency, that we are deficient in no way, holding a position of authority, makes us feel that we are the Lord of the Universe and that everyone should bow down before us. Desire for learning appears harmless. But this may also generate conceit. Learning that does not have knowledge of God for its goal may become a source of pride. The danger is not less when such learning includes knowledge of God but stops at the theoretical level. It is better to realize God in one's experience than to formulate a definition of God that can be maintained against the views of all others. Mere knowledge, even of God, incites one to indulge in a noisy display of one's learning.

Thus, Aruṇagirināthar notes that in various ways, like pursuit of sensual pleasures, of power and of learning, life becomes a mere husk. Hence his prayer to the Lord to fill it with rich content. The content is God Himself, possessing Whom one lacks nothing and without whom, all other possessions, whether singly or collectively, turn out to be liabilities, not assets for us.

If, therefore we seek God, and by His grace, find Him, we shall have achieved plenitude and perfection of life. Aruṇagirināthar does not deprecate any of the traditional ways—*jñāna, bhakti, niṣkāma-karma, rājayoga*—adopted for God-realization. His compositions bear testimony to the fact that he has enjoyed the experience of God in all these ways. He has plumbed the depths and scaled the heights of religious experience. Hence, for example,

4. ....அடியேனை
கனகத்திறு நோக்கினிதாயடி
யவர் முத்தமிழாற் புகவே பர
கதிபெற்றிட நோக்கிய பார்வையு மறவேனே. 115

it is possible for him to present the Supreme Reality thus—The nature of the Lord is such that it is not form as 'he', 'she', 'it', Yonder, here and in between these two, and, at the same, it is not no-form either'.[5] He has realised such an exalted transcendent One, as his beloved Murugan. Considering himself as a supremely blessed devotee of the Lord, he enjoys the wisdom of non-hatred (*avirodha*). That his non-hatred is total can be seen in his eagerness to honour all scriptures and to worship in all temples, no matter to which religion these belong.[6] This wisdom is like a flaming sword to be used against the god of death. Physical death has ceased to have its terrors for him. He has overcome a greater danger viz., spiritual death which is another name for hatred of others. He has attained a stage of fearlessness (*abhaya*). What is more, cleansed of his sins, he has gained the asset of a dauntless heart by worship of the Lord.[7] He commends by the example of his redeemed life and by his songs, love of God and service to His creatures.

Man is busy in various ways to escape misery and attain happiness. May we play around the word *business* in this context to bring to a focus Arunagiri's philosophy? Business may mean buying and selling as in trade, where the usual practice is to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest. Likewise, man tries to get pleasure without effort and gives pleasure to others grudgingly, if at all. Business may mean duty as in the usage 'It is the teacher's business to be helpful to his students'. Rising from the level of selfish enjoyment as at the first level, we may, at this level, still go about our duty to serve others, in a mechanical way and as a painful moral necessity. Business may mean

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5. அவனிவனுவனு டனவளிவளுவளது இதுவுதுவெனு மாறற்
றருவுரு வொழிதருவுருடையது பதி—1246

6. எச்சுருதிக்குளு நீயே தாயே—838
உலகெங்கு மேவிய தேவாலயந்தொறு பெருமாளே—130

7. அன்பாலந்தாட் கும்பிடுமவர்
தம்பாவந் தீர்த்தம் புவியிடை
அஞ்சா நெஞ்சாக்கந்தரவல - பெருமாளே—1183

right as in 'You have no business to do that'. At the level of redemption we may understand business as our joyful right to love God and serve His creatures. We may recall the words of Charles Dickens from his work, *A Christmas Carol* in this connection.

'Business—Mankind is my business. The common welfare is my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, are all my business. The dealings of my trade or profession are but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business'. Effecting an East-West or Tamiḻ-English synthesis, we may think of the Tamiḻ word *vēlai* which may be comprehensively rendered as *business* and recall the remark '*vēlai vaṇaṅguvadu emadu vēlai.*' 'It is our business to worship the Javelin (of the Lord).'[8] Indeed, Aruṇagirināthar's philosophy may be summed up in the words 'Make it your business to worship the Lord with the Javelin. You will live worthily, making life rich for others — and for yourselves.'

Human existence is not a flash in the pan, without a 'before' or 'after'. The problem is how to make the best of it. In trying to find a solution, we identify ourselves with our body or mind, generating passions that cause us to melt in dissipation. If, on the other hand, we develop a Grand Passion for God and compassion for His creatures, melting by these passions, we find paradoxically that, as against dissipation, there is an enlargement of our personality.

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8. வேலை வணங்குவதுஎமது வேலை.

ST. ARUṆAGIRINĀTHAR—HIS LIFE AND WORKS

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St. Aruṇagirināthar has the foremost place in the contribution to Music in the country and his biography is shrouded in traditions in Tamiḻ country. His works are *Tiruppugaḻ*, *Tiruvaguppu*, *Kantar Andāthi*, *Kantar Alaṅkāram*, *Kantar Anubhūti*. *Vēl Viruttam*, *Mayil Viruttam*, *Sēvel Viruttam* and *Tiru Eḻu Kootrinukkai.* Among the above nine works *Tiruppugaḻ* songs are sung with musical accompaniments in almost all the Śiva temples in Tamiḻnādu, especially in the temples dedicated to Lord Muruga (Sri Subramanya), with devotion.

2. Special mention should be made of four scholars who have collected the Saint's songs and printed them in the last century. Meḻavai Mahāliṅga Aiyar collected and edited only hundred songs in 1839, Tiruvoor Ṣubbarāya Mudaliyār in 1846, V. Pushparatha Chetty (1888-90) and Vaddakkupaṭṭu Subramaṇia Piḻḻai in 1894. Of the four, the last mentioned scholar was the gentleman who took pains to collect all the available manuscripts and edit them with the assistance of an able pandit. In his introduction to part I of the *Tiruppugaḻ* collections (1894) Thiru Piḻḻai has stated that most of the Saint's songs have been lost and that only the available songs have been collected for printing. Dr. V. S. Chengalvaraya Pillai, M.A., D.Litt. has, in his work on St. Aruṇagiri, stated as follows :—

> "Only in 1871, the idea of collecting and printing Tiruppugaḻ came to my father's mind. The Dīkṣitar of Çidambaram (the learned priests of Çidambaram Naṭarāja temple) in a controversy over their greatness quoted a famous line from Tiruppugaḻ—song No. 652 beginning "*Thatu Māmalar Mudiyālē*".

It has been said in the famous line that "the Lord is being worshipped in yāgas by the three thousand priests daily in accordance with the codes in Vēdas." Thiru Piḷḷai was captivated by the melody of the song and he came to know that according to tradition, the Saint's songs were 16,000 in number. He told me that he (his father) considered that his life mission "would have been achieved, if he collected at least one thousand of the divine songs and printed them in a book form." [1]

3. Thiru Piḷḷai's collections were published in three parts, completed in 1926 but he was able to collect only 1304 in his life time. Mention may also be made of the next attempt made by Thiru M. R. Kanthasami Kavirayar, editor of the *Vidhya Bhanu* of Madurai. He published the collections in two parts in 1933–34. The recent complete cheap edition was published by Kirupananda Variar in 1961 (Third edition, 1968) with 1323 songs. The collected works of St. Aruṇagiri including *Kantar Alaṅgāram, Kantar Anubūthi, Kantar Antādi, Tiruvaguppu, Tiruppugaḻ* etc. were published in one volume in 1935 [2] by the Śaiva Siddhāntha Mahāsamājam, Madras. This edition has taken into account all the previous editions and also of manuscripts subsequently gathered and arranged. In this edition 1361 songs from *Tiruppugaḻ* have been printed neatly in the alphabetical order of the first lines of songs.

4. As regards commentators, mention may be made of Tiruvilaṅgam of Jaffna in 1926 (for 150 poems), and that by Dr. V. S. Chengalvaraya Pillai for the entire work published in a serial between 1952 and 1957. Kripananda Variar's library edition of *Tiruppugaḻ* with commentaries are now being published in parts.

5. **Traditional accounts of the biography of the Saint**: There are several traditional accounts of the great Saint and they are summarised below.

1. *Aruṇagirināthar and his works* by Dr. V. S. Chengalvaraya Pillai, M.A., (Foot note on p. 28).

2. Thiru S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, the famous editor of '*Tamil Lexicon*' has helped the said institution by going through the manuscripts and collating the songs carefully.

(a) The temple of Lord Muruga worshipped by the saint, the temple dedicated to the saint, the *samadhi* (the sacred grave in which the body of the saint has been buried) and the *mantapa* raised over it by the then king, have all been preserved well by the Sri Aruṇāchalēśwara temple authorities at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai even today. Now for the traditional accounts.

Aruṇagiri was born at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai and his mother's name was Muttammāḷ. She died while Aruṇagiri was young and he was brought up by the elder sister, Rudhrāmbiga (another version of her name is Ādhi according to some accounts). Aruṇagiri spent his early years in the company of courtesans, and spent all the wealth of his sister, dissipated his energy and contracted an incurable disease. The girls shunned him now and, frustrated in life he threw himself down from the hill-top but Lord Muruga saved his life. From that day onwards Aruṇagiri spent his life as a sanyasi singing songs in praise of Lord Muruga.

(b) Another account is, that Aruṇagirināthar was born to a courtesan and she died when Aruṇagiri was yet a child. His sister brought him up with loving care. Aruṇagiri spent lavishly all his sister's wealth in pursuit of *chitrinbam* (sexual life) and now finding there was nothing in the house to take with him to his "call-girl", stole the only one precious article left with his sister and was slipping away with it. His sister who was watching the affair sadly called him to her and said sorrowfully, 'Brother, we are of the same mother but of different fathers. You may spend your time with me instead of with the other girls. What is there you find in them which is not found in me." The taunt stung him to the quick and he was pained. He did not want to live any longer and so hurried to the tower of the temple in the town, climbed to the top of it, and, to end his life, he plunged from there, head downwards and lo! he was rescued by Lord Muruga. With the Lord's grace secured thus unexpectedly, Aruṇagiri realised his divine mission and spent the rest of his life in singing his divine songs and visiting Śiva temples all over the country.

(c) Another traditional account is that Aruṇagiri was born on 15-9-1440. An horoscope has been drawn in detail according to

which he was destined to spend his days as a *Gñāni* (the enlightened one) and be honoured by kings. According to this tradition he was born on a Tuesday, *Uttara* Star in the Tamiḻ month of *Puraṭṭāśi*. It is said that the day when he took the form of a parrot and attained the *Sameepa Mukti* was also that day. Some other accounts say that he was born in the Tamiḻ month of *Āni* on a full moon day and, the Tamiḻs celebrate this as his birth day all over the country.

(d) Daṇḍapāṇi Swāmigal was one of the Tamiḻ poets of the early part of this century and he is affectionately called Vaṇṇa Saraba for his melodious songs. His great work is *Pulavar Purāṇam* (chronicles of the poets) and the life of Aruṇagiri has been included in it. The poet has attributed previous births to Aruṇagiri. His account is a follows:

(i) Sage Agasthya had a pet dog with him and it was born as Dēvēndra and in the succeeding births as Arjuna, St. Kaṇṇappa, poet Nakkīrar, poet Poyyā Moḻi and lastly as Aruṇagiri. It is against tradition, that the famous Saint Kaṇṇappa who was believed to have attained *Sāyujya* was reborn and also that the Arjuna's previous birth has not been mentioned in Mahābārata and Bhāgavata. Thiru M. Balasubramaṇia Mudaliyār, B.A.,B.L. who edited .St. Aruṇagiri's works (Samājam edition) has refuted this version strongly.

(ii) Further, Dhandapāṇi Swāmi's *Purāṇa* narrates another story as follows:

St. Paṭṭiṇaṭṭār in the course of his *stalayātra* (pilgrimage) visited Tiruvaṇṇāmalai and there, when he met Muttammāl, the temple girl, became amorous and wanted her company. She refused and ran away from him and narrated the incident to her mother who in her turn chided her for her foolishness. She then took her to the spot where the saint was seen. In the meanwhile the saint left the place leaving a leaf with some white dots in it. Muttammāḻ took the leaf in, with the result she gave birth to Aruṇagiri. This account does not fit in with the greatness of St. Paṭṭinattār.

(e) Thiru M. Balasubramaṇia Mudaliār has come to the following conclusions rejecting certain traditional accounts of Aruṇagiri. He says that he would not have been born to a courtesan and that he should have been born of pious Śaivite parents, as the eldest son of the family with younger brothers and sisters. He should have married in due time and, his relatives lived long while he was making pilgrimages and composing songs in praise of Lord Muruga. He was living with his pious and devoted wife and by fate, he had relationship with courtesans and lost all his wealth and health. In support of his theory, the learned editor quotes songs T. Nos. 1131 and 1141 of his edition as internal evidence.

(f) There was a poet sanyāsi in the first part of this century known as Pāmpan Kumara Guru Dāsa Śwamigaḷ and the life of Aruṇagiri as narrated by him to his followers has been given in a different form. According to him, Aruṇagiri was born in an immaculate conception to Muttammaḷ, a *rudra kaṇikai* (girl dedicated to God) of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, like Jesus Christ and he had no contact with any call girls at all. But as ill luck would have it he was afflicted with leprosy and so wanted to cure it by prayer. Accordingly he sat by the temple tower and began to pray. At the end of the sixth day Lord Muruga appeared before him and initiated him with the first line of the song commencing with "*Mutti Taru Patti Tirunagai.*" and with the Lord's grace bestowed upon him, Aruṇagiri became a saint and began to complete the song. In the course of his spiritual experience he saw his disease cured miraculously. Though this story differs from the traditional accounts there is no doubt that the disease which afflicted St. Aruṇagiri was cured by divine grace.

(g) Vaḷḷimalai Śwāmigaḷ was an ardent lover and devotee of Aruṇagiri and, he had propagated his works with great zeal. Today Thirumuruga Kirupananda Variar stands foremost in propagating St. Aruṇagiri's works all over the country. He is publishing the saint's work in beautiful editions along with his popular edition of *Tiruppugaḻ*. The life-sketch of the saint as given by him in his popular edition (1968) is summarised below:

Five hundred years ago in the holy place of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai' the place which would give one his salvation if he thinks of its glories once, Aruṇagiri was born. And, in his early days he contracted an incurable disease and to end his life to be free from it, he plunged from the top of the great temple tower. Lord Muruga who has taken his divine abode in the northern part of the temple showed his divine grace and saved hin. Then he said "Be still without speech" and with this *Upadēśa* (advice) he disappeared. From that hour onwards he spent his life in *yōga.* One day, the Lord seated on his peacock throne appeared before him and ordered St. Aruṇagiri to sing songs in his praise and Aruṇagiri began singing accordingly. As an internal evidence, the learned editor has quoted the lines in support:—

"*Aruvumari Tattuamum Aparimitha Viddaikaḷum*
Ariyana Imaippoḻutil Vāḻvitha Vēdiyanum"

(h) Once there was a divine call to Saint Aruṇagiri to go over to Vayalūr and he went to that village. There he bathed in the sacred tank called '*Śakti Theerta*' and after his bath he prayed to Lord Muruga. Lord Muruga appeared before him with one divine face and four divine hands and commanded him to continue to compose songs in praise of him. This he has stated in one of his poems as "I cannot forget while awake or asleep, the divine grace I had at Vayalūr when the Lord appeared on the peacock which has inspired me."

At Paḷani, the Saint received a *Jabamālai* (Rosary) for his prayer. While at Paḷani he had the friendship of one Prince Kaḷisai Sēvagan who was an ardent devotee of Paḷani Āṇḍava (a manifestation of Muruga) and he cured the prince who was suffering from severe headache by singing "*Talavali marundidu.*" (Medicine for headache).

At Tiruçendūr while he was praying to Lord Muruga he had the *Darśan* (vision) of the Lord's divine dance and to commemorate this, the temple authorities decorate the *utsava moorthi* (the idol which is taken in procession of festival days) in the posture of Naṭarāja i.e. on the 7th day of *Vasanthōtsava* festival.

At Tiruvaraṅgam, the Saint had *Praṇava Upadēśa* from the Lord there.

After rounding up his pilgrimage, St. Aruṇagiri stayed at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai to spend his last days. One Sambandāndān who was jealous of St. Aruṇagiri's fame asked for a poetical contest. The said Sambandāndān was a *Śakti Upāsaka* and the contest was arranged in the hall with 16 pillars. It is said that Sambandāndān invoked Goddess Kāḷi and asked her not to let Muruga slip from her on the day when he was engaged in the contest. So Aruṇagiri was not able to have Muruga's presence in the hall for a long time, as the Lord was in the divine hands of his mother Kāḷi. Aruṇagiri then sang a song in praise of the peacock and it danced to the tunes of Aruṇagiri in the presence of Kāḷi. Now Kāḷi was entranced before the sight of the beautiful peacock and lost her grip over Lord Muruga. The Lord who was waiting for this opportunity jumped upon the peacock and flew to the place where the contest was taking place. This scene has been depicted in one of the pillars of the hall and a small temple has been built around it at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai in the first *prakāra* near the great tower and the Lord is called by the name *Kambattu Iḷayanār* (the young Lord on the Pillar). Aruṇagiri had a similar *Darśan* at Tiruttaṇi also.

St. Aruṇagiri's itinerary extended to Vayira Vāna on the banks of the Saraswathi in the North and Śri Laṅka in the extreme South. It is said that he visited Tirukkōṇamalai and Katirkāmam while in Śri Laṅka and sang devotional songs on the deities in those temples.

Once again Sambandāndān played mischief while Aruṇagiri was at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. King Praudha Dēva Rāya lost his eye-sight and, at the instance of Sambandāndān the king asked St. Aruṇagiri to bring the divine flower, the sacred *Pārijāta*, for healing. Aruṇagiri agreed and casting away his earthly body in a corner took the form of a parrot, flew to heaven and brought the desired flower. Even at the smell of the flower, the king and those who were blind in the assembly, got their eye-sight restored. But by the time Aruṇagiri left the place and returned back with the flower

Sambandāndān got St. Aruṇagiri's body buried as dead and when St. Aruṇagiri returned after fulfilling the mission, saw that his body had been buried and unfit to live again in it. This grave where the body was buried is situated on the back of the main temple in the western side of the inner *prakāra.* A *maṇḍapam* (hall) has been raised over it and the tradition is that Aruṇagiri used to be in *Yōganiṣṭai* (Divine communion with God) there and a board has now been put to show the image there depicting Aruṇagiri as a yōgīswarar.[3]

6. Turning to historical facts, supported by inscriptions the following account is narrated:

Mullēndram, a village in North Ārcot district, is situated near Dēvikāpuram and the village was once the abode of Ḍiṇḍima Kavis (ḍiṇḍima poets) and they were Brahmins by caste. A Brahmin lady of the village gifted a piece of land to build a temple for Aṇṇāmalainātha and this Aṇṇāmalainātha is identified as Aruṇagirināthar. That lady is said to be a descendent of Aṇṇa-malainātha. Gopinatha Rao secured *Vibāga patramāla* (a local chronicle in manuscript), *Subadra Dhanañjaya Nātaka, Somavalli, Yōgananda Prahasana, Bhāgavatha Champu, Achuthabyutha* and *Sāluvabhyudha* and reconstructed the chronicle of Aṇṇamalaināthа. It is said that a Cōḷa king on his return from Banaras, brought with him eight Brahmin families belonging to eight different *gōtras* (Sects) and settled them in the village. One of them Guruswāmi of Kāśyapa gotra had twins as his children. They were a girl Abirāmāmbigai by name and Somanātha, a boy. The girl was given to one Rāja Natha in marriage and she gave birth to one Sonādara. This happened in A.D. 1299. This Sonādara lost his parents while he was young and he was living with his uncle Somanātha. But due to ill-treatment by his uncle's wife, the boy left the house and went to Puthūr (a nearby village) and as it was night by the time he reached it, he slept in the village temple. There in the temple, Sonādara had the divine grace and from that time he devoted his time in singing songs in praise of God.

3. Further particulars can be had from the introduction in Variar's edition (1968).

King Praudha Dēva who heard the fame of this Sonādara took him as his friend and court poet. This poet married Yegñāmbiga, the daughter of a man of Savanna *gotra*. While he was in the king's court, Sonādara requested him to give him a garden in his locality. As he did not get it, he went to Suratrana and won in contest with a Kavimalla, Anabāya by name, and got the title of *Dinḍima, Sārva bhouma Kavi* and also a gift the garden he wanted. This order of the gift was shown to the king and the garden acquired. An *agrahāra* (Brahmin colony) was formed in the place and a temple was also built in it for worship.

From the above, it is presumed that Aruṇagiri was born in 1299 and that Praudha Dēvarāya mentioned in it would not have been Dēvarāya II. The king of that period was the Hoysala king Ballala III A.D. 1292—A.D. 1342. His kingdom was plundered by Malik Kafur and after the plunder, he restored his capital in 1316. In 1328, he made Tiruvaṇṇāmalai as his southern capital. Ballala III was the ruler till 1342 when he met a tragic death at Madurai in the hands of the Muslim ruler there. Be this as it may, in A.D. 1334 the Vijayanagar kingdom was established, but Hoysala Ballala III ruled till 1342 A.D. In A.D. 1339, he was ruling happily in Sri Vijaya Virupākṣapura. That name was given to Hospet, his newly constructed capital in honour of his son Vīra Vijaya Virupākṣa whom he crowned in A.D. 1340.

It is quite possible, there is some justification for this view, because, at a later period, we find that Vīra Vijaya Śrīgiri Nātha, the younger brother of Dēvaraya II, is called in Satyamaṅgalam plate grant, by name Praudha Pratāpa Dēvarāya. In the same document Dēvarāya II is called Suratrana. The *Vibāgapatramāla* might also (like the Satyamaṅgalam plate) have applied the term Suratrana to the overlord Hoysala Ballala III. In that connection the *Vibāgapatramāla* says that the poet went to the city called Hastina. Hastinapuri was an alternative name of Anegundi or Hospet (Hampi). The author means that Aruṇagiri went to see Ballala III at Vira Vijaya Virupākṣapura, the newly erected capital. Probably at that time, the prince (Vīravijaya) was in the southern capital Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. The chronicle also says that Praudha

Dēvarāya had been newly crowned. Thus we can infer that Aruṇagiri went to the court of Ballala III only after A.D. 1340. His securing the *Sārva bhauma* title must have happened between A.D. 1340 and A.D. 1342, for Ballala III died in 1342.[4] The reference is further strengthened by a reference to Aruṇagiri's own songs (T. 80, 870 and 1132).

There is one other tradition which is to be examined now. Aruṇagiri and Villiputtoorār were contemporaries. The following story is given by Krishnamāchāri in his introduction to *Bhāratham' Udyōga Parvam* is as follows:

Poet Villiputtoorār used to have a hook to pierce the ears of those who were defeated by him in the poetical contests held with him and, when he visited Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, the poets of that town were distressed at this and requested their leader Aruṇagiri to intervene. Aruṇagiri decided to put down the pride of Villiputtoorār and invited him to a contest. He then composed *Kandarantādi* on the spot and asked Villiputtoorār to comment on the verses. It was in *yamagam* metre and the 50th verse was composed with one consonant. Villiputtoorār was not able to comment upon it and accepted defeat and threw away his hook. And when he was leaving the town, he had to cross a Śiva temple. As he was a Veera Vaishnava he threw a screen around him so not to see the temple and passed it over. Hearing this Aruṇagiri got angry and cursed him with the result that Villiputtoorār lost his eye-sight. To be cured of the curse, Villiputtoorār was asked to write a book in praise of Śiva and he accordingly wrote *Bharāta* in Tamiḻ and praised Śiva. When doing so, he got his eye-sight restored.[5]

The above episode has been mentioned in *Tirumurugan Piḷḷai Tamiḻ* also.

7. Now for historical evidence, we may refer the reader to "*Sāsanak Kavi charitam*" by Pandit M. Raghava Aiyengar in

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4. *Krishnaswami Aiyengar's Commemoration Volume*—Article by Prof. C. V. Nārāyaṇa Aiyar—Pages 176–183. For further discussions see also M. Raghava Aiyengar's *Sāsanak Kavi charitam*, pp. 130–39.

5. *Villi Bharatham, Udyoga Parvam*, edited by Krishnamachariār, Introduction.

which he has stated that Villiputtoorār should have lived in the middle of the 14th century as a contemporary of Irattaiyars and that Aruṇagiri's time should synchronise with this.

The learned Pandit has also stated that Aruṇagiri has eulogised one Somanātha and quoted song No. 828 in his support and invites our attention to an inscription (M. E. R. 56 of 1900) bestowing the headship of a Śiva temple at Puttūr and also a Mutt administration.[6] The inscription relates to the year 1370.

The life-period of Aruṇagiri was turbulent with wars as would be seen from T. 932. The murder of Ballala III, the disappearance of his successor, the invasion of the Vijayanagar against Sambuvariyars of Paḍaiveeḍu and also against the Muslim ruler of Madura would show the state of affairs during the period.[7]

Saint Aruṇagiri is a great poet endowed with divine grace and he should be classed with Sēkkiḻar of *Periya Purāṇam* fame. Kavimaṇi Dēsika Vināyakam Piḷḷai has stated that the saint's later works should also be classified under the *Tirumuṛais* now as no attempt has been made for further additions, after classifying *Periya purāṇam*, as the 12th *Tirumuṛai*, the more so, when Aruṇagiri's works are equal to the Nāyanmārs, works,[8] as devotional songs. Thiru M. Arunachalam, has invited our attention (in his *Tamil Poets of 15th century*) to the above observations of Kavimaṇi and suggested that Maikandār's work may be classified as 13th *Tirumuṛai*, while Umāpathi would come under 14th, and Aruṇagiri under 15th and Tiruvarutpā under 16th.

8. Now for the general assessment of *Tiruppugaḻ*, we may safely say that it has a very high place for devotional music and for inculcating *bakti* (devotion) in us. One of the laudatory

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6. *Sāsanak Kavi Charitam*: by Raghava Aiyangar (1958) pages 130–139. Also see M. Arunachalam's *15th century Tamiḻ poets*, pp. 20–21.

7. For details see Dr. Krishnaswami's *Tamiḻ Country under Vijayanagar* (Annamalai University publication).

8. Kavimaṇi's *Prose Works*—p. 7.

verses on *Tiruppugaḻ* states that if one hears daily the *Tiruppugaḻ* songs on Ādi Guru, he need not know *Vēdas*, *Vidyas*, and other works on *gñāna* as the Ādi Guru himself is pleased with those songs.

St. Aruṇagiri visited holy places in the country and sang devotional songs there on Lord Muruga in the temples and, it would not perhaps be wrong if we say that the local devotees wrote them and recited them as daily prayer and that, at a later date, all the songs have been gathered together under a common name *Tiruppugaḻ*. The songs relating to Paḻaṇi, Tiruçendūr, Vayalūr, Taṇigai, (Tiruttāṇi), Tiruchencode, Iḍaikaḻi and Aruṇai (Tiruvaṇṇāmalai) are many and, as more songs relating to Paḻani than any other place are available now, it may be presumed that the saint remained in that holy place for a sufficiently long time.

9. There is one more person besides Praudha Dēvarāya and Somanātha (of Somanātha mutt) referred to by Aruṇagiri. He is one Kālisai Sēvagan. This Kālisai Sēvagan became a friend of Aruṇagiri and is also known as Kavēri Sēvagan. Tiruppugaḻ verses T. 119 & T. 120-123 & 128 speak about him with affectionate regard. This Sēvagan should have been an ardent devotee of the Lord of Paḻaṇi and it is said that he had constructed at Veerai, a temple and, installed an idol in the shape of Paḻani Āṇḍavar and consecrated it to Lord Muruga. Mr. C. K. Narayanasami quotes some lines from *Tiruttaṇigai Ulā* and states that the Kavēri Rāja referred to there might be Kālisai Sēvagan sung by Aruṇagiri. This Kālisai Sēvagan should have been a prince with Veerai as his residence and that Veerai should have been a town on the banks of the Kavēri and that he had a flag of his own with Garuḍa as his Symbol.[9]

10. Thiru M. Balasubramania Mudaliar has classified Aruṇagiri's works under five large heads as follows:[10]

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9. *Sri Aruṇagirināthar* by C. K. Nārāyanasami Mudaliār (1929) pp. 68-9.

10. It is interesting and gratifying to note that the learned Mudaliar has quoted verses dealing with these aspects in his essay.

1. Poems free from sexual reference.[11]
2. Poems praying to God to show mercy to the one who was immersed in sexual pursuits.
3. Poems explaining that he had not forgotten God even when he had been living a sensual life.
4. Poems entreating God for *upadēsa.*
5. Poems describing how God had bestowed His Grace on him.

11. St. Aruṇagiri was an able composer and he is himself proud of his ability in this regard. He sings,

Madura Kavi Rājan nan en Veṇkuḍai
Virudu Koḍi Tāla Mēla
Thaṇdigai Varisai Yōḍu
Ulavumal Aganthai—Thavirnthidātho

(Will not my pride of having titles, flag, musical accompaniments' palanquin and footmen and touring the country with my ability to compose melodious songs, go!)

The words and phrases used by St. Aruṇagiri to suit the lines in the verses have undergone certain changes and a study in this direction would be a treat to the philologists and grammarians. The following words taken at random are given as examples to show how they have undergone changes:

I *Colloquials*—

Thonai	(colloquial)	Thonrai (correct form)	T 613
Athu Pannu Kalvi	(„)	Aḷavuḷḷa Kalvi („)	T 615
Aruka	(„)	Yarale („)	T 617

II *Changes in form*—

Koonkal (T. 616) *For* Kunṛukaḷ (kunṛu—(hill) becomes kun and then becomes koon)

Vazvai வழ்வை (T. 619) *For* Vāḷai (plantain)

11. A collection of 168 such songs made by the famous Gñāniār Swāmigaḷ of Tirupātiripuliyūr was available to Thiru Mudaliār while editing Tirupugaḷ for the Samājam.

III *Translation—*

Oppilāmaṇi *For* Ratnagiri (349)

12. Kaççiappan was used to be called the Kavirākṣasa for his ability in using words, phrases and folklores in his poems and perhaps it would be more fitting if this title (Kavirakṣasa) is given to Aruṇagiri as they (words, phrases, folklores) come from his heart to make the song appealing both to the ear and heart. He would easily use the words of Nāyanmārs (verses T. 70, 236, 357, 361, 429, 908, 1120 etc.) and Purāṇas (verses 423) and also of other later poets. Proverbs have been freely quoted in his poems (verses 201, 202, 399, 737, 804, 862 and 885 etc.)

13. We shall now turn to the major other works of Aruṇagiri:

1. *Kantar Anubhūti:* Devotees of Lord Muruga used to recite this in their everyday prayer, as this is considered as a *Mantra Sāstra* and it occupies a place corresponding to *Tirumantiram* of St. Tirumoolar. The blessed state of speechless communion is spoken of in verse No. 43. The *Anubhūti* concludes thus:

> "with form, without form, as existent, as non-existent,
> as fragrance, as flower, as the gem, as its radiance,
> as the foetus, as life, as the path, as the goal, come,
> Oh! Lord, as the preceptor, bless us Oh! the Dweller
> within![12]

2. *Kantar Alaṇgāram*: It consists of 102 verses (including the *Kappu*) in *Kalitturai* metre. This is considered to be the Tiruvāsagam for the devotees of Muruga. The poems describe the qualities of Lord Muruga, His *roopa,* (form) His *leelas* (plays), the soul, the way to approach Him and other allied subjects. One of the poems may be rendered in prose as follows:

"Muruga *nāmā* would assist you to utter good words. His twelve shoulders would dispel all your sins and his sharp spear and peacock would lead you, without fear, to go forward in the righteous path. Control your mind from going as prey; give up anger; give alms to the deserved; rise up to send the spear to

12. Translation quoted from an article by Dr. V. A. Devasenapati.

drill and cut open the stony heart of the haughty, Lord's Grace would come to you of its own accord and help you."

The verses are worth reciting with devotion for its mellifious charm.

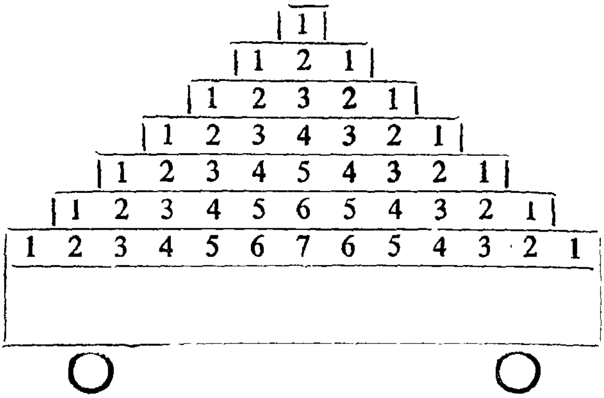
3. *Kantar Andādi:* This is a composition of 100 verses. For an Andādi, the last word of the stanza would form part of the first line of the next verse. It has already been stated that this work was composed in the poetical contest with Sri Villiputtoorār. The love episodes in the work are called the 'Bridal Mysticism', by which the Lord allows himself to be conquered in the process by the selfless devotee.

4. *Tiru Vaguppu*: This consists of 25 sections viz. (1) the holy feet, (2) Dēvendra Sanga, (3) the spear (vēl), (4) Velaikkāra, (5) Perutha vachana, (6) Butha Velala, (7) Porukalathalagai, (8) Serukalathalagai, (9) Pōrkalathalagai, (10) Gñāna Veza, (11) Kaiyil Vazakkam, (12) Vēdichin Kāvalan, (13) Sēvagan, (14) Vēl Vāngu, (15) Buya (shoulder), (16) Sithu, (17) Kaḍaikkaṇṇiyal, (18) Śiva loka, (19) Peacock, (20) Kolu, (21) the sword, (22) Śivagiri, (23) Thiruchentil, (24) Paḷani and (25) Thiru parangiri.

It is said that out of the 25 sections, only 18 are attributable to Aruṇagiri. It would be out of place to examine this aspect of the question here.

5. 6. & 7: *Mayil Viruttam, Vēl Viruttam and Sēval Viruttam:* These three minor works consisting of 10, 10 and 11 verses respectively are attributable to St. Aruṇagiri.

8. *'Thiru Ezu Koorrirukkāi:* (திருஎழுகூற்றிருக்கை) This is a single poem to be illustrated with a *chitra.* It is said to be a Ratha bandha style (to be decorated as a chariot.) The *chitra Kavi* is one of 96 kinds of *prabandhas.* The words would ascend and descend from 1 to 7 illustrated as below:—



This *Chitra Kavi* also is attributed to Aruṇagiri. The poets are classified *Āsu Kavi, Vithāna Kavi, Chitra kavi* and *Mathura kavi* and this would illustrate that Aruṇagiri is well versed in first three kinds.

Conclusion: A number of renowned poets of different times have sung in praise of Aruṇagiri in their works. Mention may be made of Thāyumānār, Mārgasagāyathēvan and others. A Veṇba compares Aruṇagiri for mellifluous style, Thiruvāthavoorār (St. Manickavāsagar) for melodious songs, Gñānasambandar for attack, Nakkīrar for criticism, Sundarar for beauty and Kamban for word play.

We may not agree in full with the sentiments expressed in this way, as each poet has his own way of expressing his thought. It may perhaps be fitting if we say that Aruṇagiri's songs have all the six qualities blended.

One of the laudatory verses prefixed to the collection of Tirupugaḻ songs praises Aruṇagiri as follows:

Are all poets enlightened ones?
Are all stones emeralds?
Can the ear (which hears the praise of
the hero on the peacock from Tirupugaḻ)
hear dirty praise of others?

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SAINT ARUṆAGIRINĀTHAR'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE MUSIC OF SOUTH INDIA

BY

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Aruṇagirināthar sang the glories of Lord Muruga in the form of hymns in Tamiḻ with 'Chandam' and these hymns are known as 'Tiruppugazh'. The term 'புகழ்' in Tamiḻ is equivalent to the word 'கீர்த்தனை' in Sanskrit. The hymns which describe the praise of the Lord came to be called 'Tiruppugazh'. Traditionally, it is believed that Lord Muruga himself had composed the first line of the first hymn '*முத்தித்தரு பத்தித் திருநகை*' in '*வண்ணப்பா*'. All the other Tiruppugazh hymns are set in Viruttappa according to Yāppilakkaṇam. Aruṇagirināthar has used the 'Vaṇṇam' which has been explained in 'தொல்காப்பியம்' (Tolkāppiyam) and made the form alive, by making use of it in all the Tiruppugazh hymns. In every Tiruppugazh, the 'தனிச்சொல்' (separate word) or 'தொங்கல்' occurs and a separate 'Chandam' is given for the 'தொங்கல்' which is a special feature in Tiruppugazh hymns. The 'தொங்கல்' stands as an embellishment of the Tiruppugazh hymn and this part is sung with 'Saṅgati'—melodic variation—by the performer.

The musicians of South India are indebted to Saint Aruṇagirināthar for his invaluable contribution to the laya and Tāḷa aspect in music. No other system of music in the world uses such a variety of Tāḷas as are used in the music of South India. The Tiruppugazh hymns are based on Layaprasthāra. In the music of South India, there are groups of 108 tālas, 175 tālas, 35 tālas, Mārgi tālas, Dēsi tālas, Navasandhi tālas etc,. Saint Aruṇagirināthar has composed in all these rare tālas and apart from these tālas, other combinations or rhythmic pattern are also introduced in the hymns and these tālas are known as 'Tiruppugazh Tālas.' Hence it can be very well said that Tiruppugazh is a 'தாள இலக்கிய பிரபந்தம்'.

Work of Tālas:

No other composer has tried compositions in the rare 108 tālas so far, in South India. It can be said that Tiruppugazh hymns are the 'Lakshaṇagranthas' for all the tālas that are prescribed for South Indian Music. Aruṇagirināthar has showed that the 108 tālas are not mere theoretical calculations with the use of permutation and combination of different rhythmic patterns but they are practicable and can be used for compositions.

In tāla, there are seven basic syllables namely Ta, Di, Thom, Nam, Ta, Lang, and Din like the seven swaras of music Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni. When 'வல்லினம்' 'மெல்லினம்' 'குறில்' and 'நெடில்' combined with the syllable 'Ya' with Ta and Nams different rhythmic patterns are evolved. This is called 'Canda-kuzhippu' or 'Chandam' in Tamiḷ which corresponds to Alamkāra in Sanskrit. Saint Aruṇagirināthar is said to have composed 16,000 Tiruppugazh hymns but unfortunately only 1307 hymns are available to us. In these 1307 hymns, the Chandam variations are 1008 in number. There are repetitions in Chandam and therefore many Tiruppugazh hymns are in one and the same tāla.

Though Saint Aruṇagirināthar had already fixed the Tāla for his hymns through Chandam at the beginning of every hymn, the rāgas were not mentioned by the composer and are set up by later musicians and, mainly by the two great eminent musician, of South India, Kañchīpuram Nayinā Piḷḷai, (Subramaṇya Piḷḷai) and Konnakkōl Pakkiriya Piḷḷai of Mannārguḍi. These two musicians popularised the Tiruppugazh hymns as a musical form of South India. The tāla was recognised on the basis of the 'Solkaṭṭu' or rhythmic passage which is given at the beginning of every Tiruppugazh. For 'Toṅgal', the rhythmic passage is given separately, as, 'தனதான'. If a hymn has the Chandam as

'தான தான தானான தானத் தனதான'

it is considered to be sung in the tāla Chaturasra Jampa, in Tisra Naḍai. This Tāla has 7 units having the Aṅgas, One Chaturasra Laghu, One Anudrutam and One Drutam. This tāla is put in Tisra Naḍai having three inner beats in every unit. The total

number of inner beats is twenty-one. The Chandam prescribed at the beginning of the hymn also consists of twenty-one beats as follows :—

தான —3, தான —3, தானனா—5
தானத்—4, தானதானா—6. Total 21

The first two தான, தான, begin with three units and so the Tisra Naḍai is fixed for the tāla. The words in the hymn are so chosen as to fit in well with the rhythm of the Chandam. This aspect makes the Tiruppugazh hymns flow smoothly with lilting rhythm.

Among 108 tālas, the hymn 'பொக்குப்பைக்கத்த' has the Chandam 'தத்தத்தத் தத்தத்' and so belongs to the Laghusēkara tālam which is one of the 108 tālas. The hymn 'அமலகமல' is set in Hamsa tālam which consists of Ēkatālam plus the Laghusēkara tālam. The Chandam runs as follows :—

தனன தனதனன தந்தத் தனத்ததன
3 + 5 + 4 + 6 = 18

(18 inner beats). The hymn 'ஆனனமுகந்து' in 'தேவேந்திரசங்க வகுப்பு' is set in the tāla Kokilapriya which belongs to the group of 108 tālas. The Chandam runs as follows :

தானன தனந்த தானன
தானன தனந்த தானன
தானன் தனந்த தானன

Saint Aruṇagirināthar speaks of Mārgi aed Dēsi tālas in 'பூத வேதாள வகுப்பு'.

சச்சபுட சாசபுட சட்பிதா புத்திரிக..........
கஞ்சப் பஞ்சகத்தாள மாம் பாடி and

உற்சவ தாளம், தர்ப்பண தாளம் and சற்சரீர தாளம்

which belong to Dēsi tālas.

Aruṇagirināthar describes Lord Muruga's dance in rhythmic passages—

செக கண சேகு தகு திமி தோதி திமியென ஆடும் மயிலோனே

(அகரமுமாகி)

'திந்தி திமித் தோதி தீதித் தீதீ
தந்த தனத் தான தானத் தான
செஞ்சணகு ஜேகுத் தாளத்தோடு
நடமாடும்' (முந்துதமிழ் மாலை)

which reveal his knowledge in setting rhythmic pattern for dances.

Aruṇagirināthar's contribution to the Tāla and Laya is beyond comparison. He is said to have lived in 15th century and he has composed in all the rare tālas which even the later composers did not use. He used all the five rhythmic variations of tāla, the Panchagatibhēdam. The following Tiruppugazh hymns stand as testimony for his greatness in tāla aspect.

அதல சேதனு ராட ஆதிமகமாயி	—	திச்ர துருவம்
திருநிலமருவிக்காவி	—	சமமட்டியம்
அருண மணி மேவு	—	சோமாதி தாளம்
படர்புவியின்	—	கண்டஏகம் (திச்ர நடை)
சாந்துடனே	—	மிச்ரஏகம்
கொம்பனையர்	—	சங்கீர்ண திரிபுடை
நாதர் சங்கடையதனில்	—	சங்கீர்ண துருவம்

The musicians of South India are today aware of only two hundred hymns with Rāga and tāla, though 1307 hymns are available in print with Chandam, among the 16,000 hymns composed by the Saint. Research Scholars and musicians should come forward to take efforts in fixing up the tāla and the rāga for the rest of the 1307 hymns. This will be a humble homage to Saint Aruṇagirināthar, the great tāla exponent of South India.

'A HOMAGE TO MUTHUSWĀMY DĪKSHITAR— THE 'NĀDA YOGIN' ON HIS BIRTH BI-CENTENARY—1975

BY

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His Life and Travels:

Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar, one of the greatest composers of Carnatic music was born in the year 1775, at Tiruvārur, in South India. His father was the illustrious Rāmaswāmy Dīkshitar who was a prolific scholar in Music, Sanskrit and Telugu. He learnt music from the doyen of Carnatic music Choukam Veerabhadrayya and had the training to play on the Veena from Veṅkata Vaidya, nātha Dīkshitar who was a descendent of the great Veṅkaṭamakhi. Rāmaswāmy Dīkshitar has composed many kritīs, Varṇams and Rāgamālikas and is the inventor of the famous rāga 'Hamsadhvani'. He was childless for a long time and performed 'Āvarana' Pooja at Vaideeśwaran Koil, was blessed by Goddess Bālāmbiks and begot three sons and a daughter. The eldest son was Muthuswāmy, the saint composer.

Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar's boyhood was spent in studying music-Sanskrit and Telugu. He became proficient in all Śāstras, Vēdānta and Vyākarana, apart from music. At that time, his father Rāmaswāmy Dīksitar was invited by one Muthukrishna Mudaliār of Maṇali to became the Samasthāna Vidwān (Court-poet) of Maṇali. Rāmaswāmi Dīkshitar accepted the offer and went to Maṇali and settled there as the Samasthāna Vidwān, with his children.

When he was living at Maṇali, Chidambaranāda Yogi his Guru came for 'Biksha' to his house. He asked Rāmaswāmi Dīkshitar to send Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar as his Sishya to accompany his tour to Kāśi (Vāraṇāsi). Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar was fifteen years old and he went with the Yogi to Vāraṇasi. Under the tutelage

of this great Saint, Dīkshitar became a profound scholar in Srī Vidya cult and learnt *Mantra* and *Tantra*, Astrology and *Yoga sādana*. He spent five or six years at Vārāṇāsi and returned to Maṇali.

Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar started his pilgrimage first to Tiruttaṇi. He performed Pooja for forty days to get 'Gñāna'. On the fortieth day, there appeared an old man who put a sugar candy into his mouth. Blessed by this old man who was none other than Lord Subrahmaṇya himself, Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar started composing devotional songs. His first composition was in the rāga, Māyamālavagoula commencing with the words 'Srīnāthadi Guruguho'. He has set the rāga Mudra and the Composer's Mudra in that composition and he followed this practice in all his later compositions. He composed a group of eight Kritis and this group of songs is known as Guruguha Kritīs or Tiruttaṇi Kritīs. These eight Kritīs are cast in eight Vibhakthīs (cases) respectively which shows his command of the language.

From Tiruttaṇi, Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar went to the Tirupathy hills. He sang the famous piece 'Sēshāchala nāyakam' in Varaḷi in praise of Lord Venkatēśwara and continued his journey to Kālahasthi. The Śiva lingas are worshipped as manifestations of each one of the five elements *Prithvi*, *Ap*, *Tējas*, *Vāyu* and *Ākāśa* which mean Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Sky respectively. Kālahasthi is the Kshētra (holy place) for Vāyu or Wind. He composed 'Sri Kālahasthēśa, in rāga Huseni, at this place. He proceded then to Maṇali and related his experiences at Tiruttaṇi and other places to his father and his brothers. Dīkshitar's family was devoted to Dēvi, being followers of Srī Vidya Cult, and went to Kañchi from Maṇali and settled there for sometime. In this place, Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar composed many kritis, 'Kāñchadalayadākshi' in Kamalāmanohari, 'Nīrajākshi Kāmakshi' in Hindolam, 'Śaraśwathimanohari' in rāga Saraśwathimanohari, 'Ekamrēśa Nayikē" in Karnātak Suddasāvēri, 'Christaya Mākandā' in rāga Bhairavi, 'Ekamra nādam Bhajēham' in rāga Gamakakriya 'Kailāsanādam' in Vēgavāhini, 'Kailāsa nāthēna' in Kāmboji, 'Varadarājam Upāsmahē' in rāga Sārañga. In this place, God is worshipped as, the mani-

festation of *Prithvi* or earth element and the song 'Chintaya Mākanda' in rāga Bhairavi was sung in praise of Prithvi.

In Kāñchi, there was the great philosopher, a sanyāsin by name Upaniṣad Brahman who wrote commentaries on some of the Upaniṣads. He was a staunch Rāmabhakta and had composed the famous Ramāshtapadi on the model of Jayadēva's 'Gītagōvinda'. Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar became his student and set to music, Rāmashtapadi composed by his Guru, Upaniṣad Brahman. Dīkshitar composed 'Rāmachandrēna Samrakshiroham' in rāga Māñji and 'Mamava raghuvīra' in rāga Māhuri. He stayed at Kāñchi for four years and left for Tiruvārūr.

On his way to Tiruvārūr, he visited Tiruvaṇṇāmalai and composed the song 'Arunāchalenātham' in Sārańga. This place is the manifestation of God as Agni or Fire. He proceded to Chidambaram which is also one of the Pañcha Lińga Kshētras wherein God as Aakasa or Sky is manifested. He sang the song 'Ānandanaṭana Prakāsam' in rāga Kedāram. The Devi here is called Śivakāmēśwari and he sang a composition, 'Śivakāmēswarim' in rāga Kalyāni. He also sang in praise of Lord Gōvindarāja, one in Mukari beginning with the words 'Govindarājam Upāsmahē' and 'Gavindarājēna' in rāga Mechabouli. He next went to Vaideeśwaran Koil and sang there many compositions, 'Śri Vaidyanātham' in Atāna, 'Bhajare Re Chitta Balāmbika', in Kalyāṇi etc. He visited Māyuram and composed the group Kritis which are eight in number in praise of Goddess Abhayāmba which is popularly known as Abhayāmba Navāvarṇa Keertana. From Mayuram, he went to Tiruvārūr. Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar composed the largest number of Kritis at this place. Among these are compositions on Śri Thyagarāja Swāmy, a group of Vibhakthi Kritis on him and, one Thyagarāja Ashṭakam consisting of eight slokas on Sri Thyagarāja, compositions on Sri Kamalāmba the famous Kamalāmba Navāvaraṇam, eight kritis on Neelothpalāmba, compositions on Lord Gaṇēsa, (the famous among them being Vātapi Ganapathim in Hamsadvani,) Kritis on Lord Subrahmaṇya and a set of five kritis in worship of the five lińga shrines situated in the Tiruvārūr temple itself—Achaleśwara, Hāṭakēśwara

Valmikēśwara, Ānandēśwara and Siddhēśwara. Apart from these compositions he also sang on Rēṇukā Dēvi who is enshrined in Vijayapuram at Tiruvārūr in rāga Kannaḍa-bangala and another composition in praise of one of the Tēvāram Trio, Sundaramoorthy Nayanār in rāga Takka. The Thyagarāja Ashtakam is given below:-

कल्याण सौगन्धिक पुष्पहार संशोभिकण्ठाय कलाधराय ।
कल्याणशैलेन्द्र धनुर्धराय श्रीत्यागराजाय नमो नमस्ते ॥

मुक्तेन्द्र नीलादि सुरत्नराशि संशोभि सिंहासन संस्थिताय ।
मुक्ताकुमाराख्य मखिस्तुताय श्रीं त्यागराजाय नमो नमस्ते ॥

कीशानन श्रीमुचुकुन्द भूप संप्रार्तनात् भूतलमागताय ।
कोशान्तरस्थाय कुमारपित्रे श्री त्यागराजाय नमो नमस्ते ॥

गोप्त्रे पशूनां गुरुराजस्य धत्रे सतां श्रीपुरसंस्थिताय ।
गुप्तस्वगात्राय हृदब्जगाय श्रीत्यागराजाय नमो नमस्ते ॥

कान्ताति सौन्दर्य रथस्थिताय कान्तासमाश्लेषित कन्धराय ।
कान्ताधिरूपाय गजास्यपित्रे श्री त्यागराजाय नमो नमस्ते ॥

निरन्तराभ्यास विशेषवेद्य बोधस्वरूपाय निरञ्जनाय ।
निरङ्कुशानन्द पदप्रदाय श्री त्यागराजाय नमो नमस्ते ॥

श्रीमच्चिदानन्द गुरुस्वरूप श्री त्यागराजाङ्घ्रि सरोजयुग्मे ।
अनन्तबोध प्रदमष्टकाख्य स्तोत्रं शुभकत्याकृतमर्पितं मया ॥

Kalyāṇa Sougandhika Pushpahāra Samśobhi Kanṭāya Kalādharāya|
Kalyāṇa Ṣailendra Dhanurḍharāya Srī Thyāgarājāya Namo Namasthē||

Muktēndra Neelāḍi Surathnarāśi Samśobhi Simhāsana Samsthithāya|
Muktākumārākya Makhiśthuthāya Śrī Thyāgarājāya Namo Namasthē||

Keeśānana Śrī Muchukunda Bhoopa Samprārthanāth Bhoothalamāgatāya|
Kosāntarasthāya Kumārapitre Śrī Thyāgarājāya Namo Namasthē||

Gopthrē Paṣūnām Gururājasya Dhatrē Satām Sripurasamsthithāya|
Gupthasvagātrāya Hrudabjagāya Śrī Thyāgarājaya Namo Namasthē||

Kānthāthi Soundarya Rathasthithāya Kānthāsamāslēshitha Kandharāya |
Kānthardharoopāya Gajāsyapithrē Śrī Thyāgarājaya Namo Namasthe ||
Nirantharābhyāsa Visēshavedhya Bodhasvarūpāya Nirañchanāya |
Nirankuśānanda Padapradāya Śrī Thyāgarājaya Namo Namasthe ||
Srimatchidānanda Gurusvarūpa Śrī Thyāgarājangri Sarojayugme |
Ananthabodha Pradamashtakākyam Sthotram Subhakthyā-kruthamarpitham Mayā ||

The songs in praise of Nīlothpalāmba are set in the ragas Nārāyana Goula, Rītigoula, Kannaḍagoula, Kēdāragoula, Goula, Māyamālavagoula, Pūrvagoula, and Chhāyāgoula respectively. These are known by the name 'Goula' group songs. In Tiruvārūr temple all the Shodaśa Gaṇapathīs find a place and Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar composed songs for all the Shodaśa or sixteen manifestations of Gaṇapathi. Justice T. L. Venkatarama Iyer who was a specialist and authority on Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar's compositions, remarks "In short, it can be said that the kritis of Dīkshitar on the deities of Tiruvārūr form the largest block of songs written by him on any shrine at any place in his career, and that qualitatively also, they rank among his best."

Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar spent his life visiting Kṣhetras and singing the glories of each deity and shrine. He visited Swāmimalai and sang 'Swāmināṭha' in rāga Naṭa and 'Sri Balasubramaṇya' in rāga Bilahari. At Mannārguḍi, he composed the famous 'Sri Rājagopāla' in Sāvēri rāga and 'Sri Vidya Rājagopālam' in Jaganmohini. He visited Nāgapaṭṭiṇam and composed songs in praise of Sri Soundararāja, Vilāyadātchi and Lord Kāyārohaṇa. In Tiruvānaikāval, the linga is worshipped as the manifestation of *Ap* or water and Dīkshitar went to this place and sang the piece 'Jambupathe' in the rāga Yamunakalyāṇi. Here he completed his group kritis, of five Kshetra or Pañcha Linga Sthala Kritis. He visited Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and sang a few compositions on the deities there. He composed songs in praise of Sri Raṅganātha of Śriraṇgam also. In Kivālur, he composed the famous song in rāga Sankarābharaṇam 'Akshaya Linga Vibho'. Here one Vaidyalinga Mudaliār,

a Mirāsdar of Kuḷikkarai became the patron of Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar. The famous Navagraha Kritis on the nine planets which are set in the famous Suladi Sapta Talas respectively were composed when one Thambiyappan, a player of Suddha Maddalam at Tiruvārūr temple took ill, to relieve him from his sufferings. He was cured when Dīkshitar sang the kriti regularly the composition 'Bruhaspathe' in Atāna. They stand as a testimony for Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar's profound knowledge on Astrology,

Dīkshitar had a host of disciples namely Thirukkaḍaiyūr Bhārati, Vīṇa Venkatarāma Iyah, Dēvur Subrahmanya Ayya, Koranād Rāmaswāmy Iyer, the famous Tāñjore Quartet, Ponnaiya, Chinnaiya, Śivānandam and Vaḍivēlu and the famous dancer Tiruvārūr Kamalam.

Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar composed a padavarṇam in Tiruvārūr Thyāgēsa 'Rupamu Suchi' in rāga Toḍi and a Daru 'Ni Sāti Daivamandu Ledani' in rāga Srirañjani for his disciple the famous dancer Tiruvārūr Kamalam in Telugu language.

In the year 1817, Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar lost his parents. His brothers Chinnaswāmy and Bāluswāmy went to Madurai to teach Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar's compositions at the request of some distinguished persons from Madurai. Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar did not want to stay at Tiruvārūr after his brothers, departure to Madurai. He went to Tañjāvūr and was greeted by the great composer Shyāma Sāstri. Dīkshitar visited the well known Brahadeeśwara temple and composed several Kritis and many were composed in Vivadi mēḷas. He taught the composition which he composed in Vivadi mēlas to the Tañjāvur brothers. There is no authentic information so far, as to the meeting of Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar with Saint Thyāgarāja, though a few traditional stories exist to the effect that Thyāgarāja and Dīkshitar met in the former's residence and Dīkshitar composed the famous song 'Mamavapattabhi Rāma, in rāga Maṇirañgu in Thyāgarāja's house. The famous song of Dīkshitar in rāga Lalita 'Hiranmayīm Lakshmīm' was composed at Tañjāvūr. He stayed at Tañjavur for four or five years and returned to Tiruvārūr. From there he went to Madurai to know the welfare of his brothers. He heard

in Madurai that his brother Chinnaswāmi had died, and Bāluswāmi had left for Rāmēśwaram. Dikshitar visited the Meenakāhi Amman temple at Madurai and composed many songs in praise of Goddess Meenakshi. He sang a piece in rāga Bilahari 'Ēkadantam Bhajēham' in praise of Lord Vignēśwara whose temple in situated at the banks of the river Vaigai. He also composed a group of eight Kritis based on the eight vibhakthis on Goddess Meenakṣhi. Compositions on Lord Sundarēśwara were also made by Dikshitar during his stay at Madurai. He proceded to Aḷagarkoil, and sang in praise of Lord Sundararāja in rāga Ramakriya. Dikshitar left for Ramēśwaram after his short stay at Madurai. The composition 'Ramanātham Bhajeham' in Rāmakriya is a famous kriti which is composed at Ramēśwaram. (Sri Rāmam Ravikulabdi Somam' in rāga Nārayaṇagoula is another well-known song which was composed by him at Rāmeśwaram. He went to Sāttur on his way to Ettayāpuram and ascertained from the Archakas of the temple that his brother Bāluswāmi. had become a Samasthāna Vidwān of Ettayāpuram and that his marriage was to be celebrated at Ettayāpuram two days after his arrival at Sattur. Dikshitar felt very happy and very much wanted to attend his brother's wedding and he started his journey to Ettayāpuram. On the way to Ettayāpuram he found the place draught-stricken and there was an acute scarcity of water. Here he sang the song 'Ānandāmruthakarṣhini' in the rāga Amruthavarṣini. At once there was a downpour of heavy rain. This rāga 'Amruthavarṣhini' is Muthuswāmi Dikshitār's own creation. When the rain stopped, he started his journey to Ettayāpuram and he was greeted there by the Maharāja of Ettayāpuram. He attended his brother's marriage with great joy. Dikshitar spent the rest of his life in Ettayāpuram. He visited many shrines from Ettayāpuram and composed songs on the Deities enshrined at these places. He visited Tiruchendūr, and Ḳaẓhugumalai and composed songs in praise of Lord Subrahmaṇya. He went to Tirunelvēli and sang in praise of Lord Salivatēśwara and Devi Kānthimathi. He also went to Sabarimalai and composed 'Hariharaputhram' in rāga Vasantha. He went to Guruvāyūr and sang on the Lord in the Kriti 'Sri Krishnam Bhaja Mānasa' in rāga Thoḍi.

This great soul took Eternal Rest on the Chaturdaśi day preceding Dīpāvaḷi in the year 1834. He sang the song 'Ehi Annapoornē' in Punnagavarāli and performed Pooja. He asked his Sishyas to sing the compositions which were in praise of Devi. Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar asked his students to sing again the kriti 'Meenakshi Me Muḍam'. When they were singing the phrase 'Meenalochani Paśamōchani', Dīkshitar shed his mortal Coil and became immortal.

2. His Devotion to God and the Literary and Musical aspects of his compositions:

Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar is an Yogīśwara and enjoyed the Eternal Bliss through his compositions. He sings

आनन्देश्वरेण संरक्षितोऽहम्	Ānandeswareṇa Samrakshithoham
सदानन्दरूपोऽस्मि	Sadānandarooposmi
ब्रह्मानन्दरूपोऽस्मि	Brahmanandarooposmi

Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar has contributed to the music of South India a rich legacy of compositions in various rāgas including seventy-two mēla kartha rāgas, Group compositions or Samuḍāya Kritis on various deities, Manipravāla Krities, Rāgamalikas, Jatiswara Sahithyas on the model of Western tunes and last but not least, the dance compositions such as Padavarnam and Daru in Telugu language. His compositions reveal that he was an astounding philosopher and an adept in Sāstras. His compositions also reveal that he was a Śrividya Upāsaka and a Nāḍa yogin who experienced the 'Satchiḍananda Paripoorṇa Brahma'.

Dīkshitar's compositions are permeated with Bhakthi (or devotion) and they stand as a kind of Stotra's or hymns to the various deities. He himself has said that he is a "Vainika—Gāyaka'. Therefore his compositions are suited to the playing in Veena style and in vocal style. The tempo of the pieces is slow and the *rasa* depicted in his compositions is '*Sānta*' *rasa* as the theme of the compositions are mainly invocations of deities. His songs are descriptive and hence Sanskrit was the medium for his compositions. They are set in *Vilambitha laya* or slow tempo, so that the singer can understand the meaning and concentrate on

the Deity, to experience the bliss or Ānanda, which Dīkshitar had himself experienced. Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar has introduced Madyamakāla passages in all his compositions to emphasise that his compositions should be sung in Vilambita laya or slow tempo.

Though Dīkshitar's compositions are couched with *rāgabhāva*, the prominence is more for *Arthabhāva* or the meaning of the phrases. His songs are not of the emotional type and, only the Bhakthi element is depicted. We do not find various emotions portrayed in Dīkshitar's compositions but only the *S'ānta rasa* is felt and every *raga* which brings out a sedate, serene, calm and sublime aspect which makes one to experience the Aesthetic Bliss or Paramānanda through devotion or Bhakthi. Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar's compositions can aptly be described as '*Bhakthipradhana Prabhandas* or '*Sthothra Mālas.* No doubt, where intellect rules, the emotion becomes sub-ordinate and so in Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar's compositions the emotional aspect of the rāgabhava does not find a place but every rāga is excellently handled by the genius to depict the Bhakthi element through *S'anta rasa* alone.

Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar is one of the greatest composers of Carnatic music and he pours out his thought through majestic and grand diction compared to that of Browning and Milton. His songs contain '*Stotras*' of various deities, information about various religious worship of the Gods, Planets and details of pilgrimage centres. Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar is an '*Upāsaka*' of '*S'rividya*' and his compositions reveal that he is adept in '*Mantra*', '*Tantra*' '*Yoga*' and '*Amba*' cult.

Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar chose the sonorous and majestic language, Sanskrit, as the medium for most of his compositions though he has also composed a few songs in Telugu. The choice for this language to his compositions may be for two reasons. Firstly, his compositions which are set in Sanskrit are permeated with *Bhaktirasa* alone, as the theme of the compositions is only in praise of Gods and Goddesses or planets. This is a unique feature of Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar's compositions. As his compositions are '*Bhaktipradhana Prabandhas* the '*Dēvabhasha*' Sanskrit, naturally suits more than the other languages. Secondly, Dikshitar's com-

positions reflect the sayings of 'Vēdas', 'Upanishads' 'Rāmāyana', 'Bhāgavata', 'Lalita Sahasranāmam', 'Mooka Pañchasati', 'Soundaryalahari' 'Amba Navamaṇimalai', 'Syāmala Danḍakaṃ', 'Vishnu Sahasranāmam', Namāvali's and Stotras of Vinayaka, Subrahmaṇya, Natarāja, Thyagarāja and other deities and Planets and also contain details of 'Yoga', 'Mantra' and 'Tantra' Sastras. Thus Muthuswāmi Dikshitar's compositions are more like 'Dhyāna Slokas'. For these reasons he might have resorted to Sanskrit as his medium of expression for his musical compositions as, the words and phrases will be familiar to people who have had centuries of devotion to our Gods and Goddesses and of the 'Stotra' literature, from which he has freely drawn the words and phrases.

Muthuswāmi Dikshitar has revealed through his compositions that he is a profound scholar in Sanskrit. He has attached much importance to the tonal value of the 'Sāhitya'. Literary beauties such as '*Prāsa*' and '*Yati*' and their different varieties abound in Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar's 'Kritis. The composition 'Tyāgarāja Yoga Vaibhavam' is given below as an example of Dikshitar's style of diction wherein literary excellences figure in abundance.

Rāga Anandabhairavi: Tāla Rupakam

Pallavi:

त्यागराज योग वैभवम् सदाशिवम्	Thyāgarājayogavaibhavam Sadāsivam
त्यागराज योग वैभवम्	Thyāgarājayogavaibhavam
अगराज योग वैभवम्	Agarājayogavaibhavam
राजयोग वैभवम्	Rājayogavaibhavam
योग वैभवम्	Yogavaibhavam
वैभवम्	Vaibhavam
भवम्	Bhavam
वम्	Vam

Charanam:

नागराज विनुतपदम् नादबिन्दुकलास्पदम्	Nāgarāja Vinutāpadam Nāda-bindukalāspadam
योगिराज विदितपदम् युगपद्भोगमोक्षप्रदम्	Yogirāja Viditāpadam Yugpadbhoga Mokshapradam

योगरूढ नामरूप विश्वसृष्ट्यादि करणम्	Yogarooḍa Nāmaroopa Viśwasrushṭyādi Karaṇam
युग परिवृत्यब्द मास दिन घटि कादयावरणम्	Yugapari Vruthyabda Māsa Dina Ghati Kādyāvaranam
श्री गुरुगुह गुरु सच्चिदानन्द भैरवीशम्	Sriguruguha Guru Satchidā-nanda Bhairavīśam
शिवशक्त्यादि सकल तत्व स्वरूप प्रकाशम्	Sivasakthyōdi Sakala Tatva Swarūpaprakāśam
स्व प्रकाशम्	Swaprakāśam
स्वरूप प्रकाशम	Swaroopaprakāśam
तत्व स्वरूप प्रकाशम्	Tatvaswaroopaprakāśam
सकल तत्वस्वरूप प्रकाशम्	Sakalatatvaswaroopaprakāśam
शिव शक्त्यादि सकल तत्वस्वरूप प्रकाशम् (त्याग)	Sivasaktyādi Sakalatatva Swaroopaprakāśam

Muthuswami Dīkshitar's Group compositions are mostly composed in the eight '*Vibhaktis*' or Sanskrit grammar. His group compositions on Sri Tyagarāja Swāmi of Tiruvārur is a group of '*Vibhakti kritis*' on the eight cases of Sanskrit which are given below:—

त्यागराजो विराजते	Thyāgarāja Virājate	– Athana
त्यागराजं भजरे	Thyāgarājam Bhajare	– Yadukulakāmbhoji
त्यागराजेन संरक्षितोऽहं	Thyāgarājena Samrak-shithoham	– Salakabhairavi
त्यागराजाय नमस्ते	Thyāgarājaya Namastho	– Begaḍa
त्यागराजात् अन्यम्	Thyāgarājat Anyam	– Darbar
श्री त्यागराजस्य भक्तो	Sri Thyāgarājasya Bhakto	– Rudrapriya
त्यागराजे कृत्य कृत्यम्	Thyāgarāje Krutya Krutyam	– Saraṅga
विश्वनाथ त्यागराज	Viswanātha Thyāgarāja	– Vīravusantam

These are eight in number and each composition is cast in one of the eight *Vibhaktis* in order. Sri Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar followed this practice whenever he composed groups of songs of eight or

more on a particular God or Goddess. '*Vibhakti*' is the case in which a noun is inflected in Sanskrit. This adds beauty to his *Samudaya Kritis* and bespeaks his command over the Sanskrit language. His first group of songs are known as 'Guru—guha' Kritis which are eight in number and composed in eight *Vibhaktis*. They are the following:—

श्री नाथादि गुरुगुहो	Sri Nāthadi Guruguho	-	Māyamālavagoula
मानस गुरुगुह	Mānasa Guruguha	-	Ānandabhairavi
श्री गुरुणा	Sri Guruṇā	-	Padi
गुरुगुहाय	Guruguhāya	-	Sāma
गुरुगुहात् अन्यम	Guruguhāth Anyam	-	Balahamsa
गुरुगुहस्य	Guruguhasya	-	Pūrvi
गुरुगुहस्वामिनि	Guruguhaswamini	-	Bhānumati
श्री गुरुगुह मूर्ते	Sri Guruguha Moorthe	-	Udayaravi-chandrika

The group compositions on Śri Kamalāmba are eleven in number and the first eight, the '*Avarana*' *Kritis* are in the eight *Vibhaktis* or cases. The ninth '*Avarana*' *Kriti* which is set in the raga Aahiri, consists of all the eight 'Vibhaktis' in it. The following are the group songs on Śri Kamalāmba.

	कमलाम्बिके	(Dhyāna)	-	Toḍi
1.	कमलाम्बा संरक्षतु	Kamalāmbā Samrakshatu	-	Ānandabhairavi
2.	कमलाम्बाम् भजरे	Kamalāmbām Bhajare	-	Kalyāṇi
3.	श्री कमलाम्बिकया	Sree Kamalāmbikayā	-	Sankarābharaṇam
4.	कमलाम्बिकायै	Kamalāmbikāyai	-	Kambhoji
5.	श्री कमलाम्बिकायाः परं	Sri Kamalāmbikāyaḥ param	-	Bhairavi
6.	कमलाम्बिकायास्तव	Kamalāmbikāyasthava	-	Punnagavarāli
7.	श्री कमलाम्बिकायां भक्तिम्	Sri Kamalāmbikāyam Bhakthim	-	Sahāna
8.	श्री कमलाम्बिके अव अव	Sri Kamalāmbike Ava Ava	-	Ghanta

श्री कमलाम्बा जयति	Sri Kamalāmbā Jayathi	-	Aahiri
श्री कमलाम्बिके	Sri Kamalāmbike	-	Sri rāga

The group songs on the Goddess Abhayāmba are eight in number and they are also cast in the eight '*Vibhaktis*'. They are as follows:—

अभयाम्बा जगदम्बा	Abhayambā Jagadambā	-	Kalyāni
आर्यां अभयांबां	Aryā Abhayāmbām	-	Bhairavi
गिरिजय अजय	Girijaya Ajaya	-	Sankarābharaṇam
अभयाम्बिकायै	Abhayāmbikāyai	-	Yadukulakāmbhoji
अभयाम्बिकायाः	Abhayāmbikāyāḥ	-	Kēdahagoula
अम्बिकायाः	Ambikāyāḥ		
अभयाम्बिकायाः	Abhayāmbikayai	-	Kedāram
अभयांम्बिकायाम्	Abhayāmbikāyām	-	Sahāna
दाक्षायणी	Dakshāyaṇī	-	Toḍi

Sri Kamalāmba represents the Dēvi while she was performing penance to marry Lord Siva and she becomes Nilotpalāmba after Her marriage with Lord Śiva. Dīkshitar composed another set of eight songs based on the eight 'Vibhaktis' of Sanskrit grammar as follows:—

नीलोत्पलाम्बा जयति	Nīlotpalāmbā Jayati	-	Narāyanagoula
नीलोत्पलाम्बाम् भजरे	Nīlotpalāmbām Bhajare	-	Rītigoula
नीलोत्पलाम्बिकया	Nīlotpalāmbikāya	-	Kannaḍagoula
नीलोत्पलाम्बिकायै	Nīlotpalāmbikāyai	-	Kēdāragoula
नीलोत्पलाम्बिकायाः	Nīlotpalāmbikāyaḥ	-	Goula
नीलोत्पलाम्बयस्थान	Nīlotpalāmbayasthāna	-	Mayamālavagoula
नीलोत्पलाम्बिकायाम्	Nīlotpalāmbikāyam	-	Purvagoula
श्री नीलोत्पलाम्बिके	Sree Nīlotpalāmbike	-	Chhayagoula

The same grouping by means of '*Vibhakti*' variations is found in Lord Subrahmanya group songs too.

Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar stands unique in respect of using the various '*Alaṅkāras*' which are literary embellishments. All com-

posers of classical Carnatic music have made use of '*Prāsa*' and '*Yati*' patterns while Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar is the only composer who has included '*Alaṅkāras* such as '*Gopuchcha*' and '*Srotovaha*' '*Yatis*' in his compositions. In the Kriti 'Tyagarāja Yoga Vaibhavam' in the rāga 'Aanandabhairavi' he has used both the '*Gopuchcha*' and '*Strotovaha*' '*yati*' patterns in the Pallavi and Charana part. In the Pallavi, the 'Gopuchcha Yati' runs as follows:—

त्यागराजयोग वैभवम्	Thyāgarājayoga Vaibhavam
अगराजयोग वैभवम्	Agarājayoga Vaibhavam
राजयोग वैभवम्	Rājayoga Vaibhavam
योग वैभवम्	Yoga Vaibhavam
वैभवम्	Vaibhavam
भवम्	Bhavam
वम्	Vam

In the Charana, '*Srotovaha*' 'Yati' occurs as follows:—

स्व प्रकाशम्	Sva Prakāśam
स्वरूप प्रकाशम्	Svarūpa Prakāśam
तत्वस्वरूप प्रकाशम्	Tatvasvarūpa Prakāśam
सकल तत्वस्वरूप प्रकाशम्	Sakalatatvasvarūpa Prakāśam
शिवशक्त्यादि सकल तत्वस्वरूप प्रकाशम्	Sivasaktyādi Sakalatatva Svarūpa Prakāśam

In the song Sri Varalakshmi in Srirāga the '*Gopuchcha Yati*' occurs in the Pallavi section:

श्री सारसपदे	Sri Sārasapade
रसपदे	Rasapade
सपदे	Sapade
पदे	Pade

In the composition 'Maye Tvam' in the raga 'Suddha Taraṅgini', we have another example of '*Gopuchcha Yati*' in the Charana:—

सरसकाये Sarasakāyē

रसकाये Rasakāyē

सकाये Sakāyē

आये Āyē

The beauty of '*Dvityak hara Prāsa*' is found in the Anupallavi part of the Kriti 'Sañkaracharyam' in the raga Sañkarābharaṇam.

शंकर भगवच्‌ चरणापर वर्यम् ।	Śañkara Bhagavaç çaraṇāpara Varyam
शंकर कृपया वर्धित वीर्यम्	Śañkara Krupayā Vardhita Vīryam
शंकरागसित यशो धुर्यम् अनि	Śañkarāgasita Yaśō Dhuryam Ani
शंकराब्ज मवार्यं तपश्शौर्यम् श्री ॥	Śañkarābja Mavāryam Tapaśśouryam Śree

The 'Yati.' word 'Sa' occurs at the commencement of each pada.

The song 'Chidambara Natarāja' which is set in the raga Danaroopi is full of '*Antyaprāsa*' throughout the composition in both *Pallavi* and *Charaṇa* parts.

Pallavi:

चिदंबर नटराज मूर्तिम् ।	Chidambara Natarāja Moorthim
चिंतयामि अतनु कीर्तिम ॥	Chintayāmi Atanu Keerthīm

Charaṇam:

मदम्बा शिवकामी पतिम्	Madamba Sivakamī Pathim
मदन जनक महित पशुपतिम्	Madana Janaka Mahitha Pasupathim
वदन कमल गुरुगुह विनुतिम्	Vadana Kamala Guruguha Vinuthim

Apart from his Sanskrit compositions, he has composed '*Maṇipravāḷa*' compositions in which the languages used are Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamiḷ; An example in cited below:—

Sanskrit (Venkatachalapathe) Ninnu Nammiti (Telugu)

(Telugu) Vegame Nanu (Rakshiyumai'ya (Tamiḷ)

Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar is the first composer to introduce '*Samaṣti Charaṇa*' in his compositions. Dīkshitar's compositions reveal that he had acquired mastery over Sanskrit language and was proficient in *Kāvya* and *Alaṅkāra Sāstras.* Music cannot exist without devotion. *Saṅgīta* and *Bhakti* go hand in hand in the compositions which are set in the majestic Sanskrit language. Dīkshitar can be compared with Bach, Michelangelo, Dante and Milton. Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar's contribution to the music world is invaluable and, as long as there is '*nāda*' in this world, there will remain the immortal compositions of Dīkshitar and it is the duty of every musician to pay homage to Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar.

MUSIC FESTIVAL REPORTS

1. INTERNATIONAL MUSIC WEEK FESTIVAL— a Short Report

DR. S. SITA, M.A., Ph D.,
(*Head of the Department of Music, Madras University*).

The staff and students of the Department of Indian Music, University of Madras, celebrated in a fitting manner the International Music Festival on the 10th of October 1975 with the aid of the grant graciously provided by the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiāh.

The function was unique in that there was no speech-making as such. It was briefly observed at the outset that Music was itself the true universal speech of mankind having a direct and transcending influence. Its power was felt by the innocent babe, the low and the serpent alike. Since "Music begins where words end", as a fitting offering to the Goddess of Music, a moment of silence was observed by all those present, followed subsequently by an outburst of music. True to the spirit of the occasion, there was a sense of dedication and devotion on the part of each participant.

The programme for this festival consisted of two sections, devoted to classical Music and Folk Music. About thirty compositions representative of the various forms of classical music were rendered in Group, instrumental Groups and in Solo as well. These included the Varṇa, kṛitis in different rāgas and in different languages by composers with distinct styles, songs from opera, dance and sacred musical forms. The second and the last section of the programme presented the attractive and lively folk music of South India in the regional languages viz. Tamiḻ, Telugu, Kannaḍa and Malayāḷam. The folk music recital included items such as the harvest songs, occupational songs, marriage songs, worship songs

and ballads, rendered by the participants to the accompaniment of suitable folk instruments.

The programme was presented in the following order:—

(a) At the commencement, there was a group performance of vocal, vīṇa and violin to the accompaniment of mṛidaṅga and in this the entire department, the staff and students participated.

(b) The second item was the recital by the Violin group headed by Thiru. B. K. Viswanatha Sarma, Lecturer in Violin.

(c) This was followed by a solo Vīna performance by Dr. Selvi S. Sita, Head of the Department of Music.

(d) Next was the Group Vīna recital, headed by Thiru. N. C. Parthasarathy, Lecturer in Vīna.

(e) Then came the performance by the Vocal Group, led by Tirumati K. R. Lakshmi, Lecturer in Vocal Music.

(f) Subsequently there were renderings of items of Devotional Music, which was followed by Folk music recital by the students and ex-students of the Department.

With the singing of National Anthem, the programme concluded.

Rhythmic accompaniment of Mṛidaṅgam for the entire concert, was, provided by Thiru. Suchindram Krishnan of All India Radio, Madras.

The function was largely attended by the staff, students, artists and music lovers.

2. MĀRGAZHI MUSIC FESTIVAL AT MADRAS

SELVI S. A. DURGA, M.A., M.Litt.,
(*Lecturer, Department of Music, University of Madras*).

The birth bi-centenary of Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar and the sixth birth centenary of Saint Aruṇagirināthar were celebrated during the Music Festival of Madras in December 1975.

The Music Academy observed the birth bi-centenary of Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar, one of the greatest composers of Carnātic music. Dr. Karunanidhi, the Chief Minister of Tamiḻnāḍu inaugurated the fortyninth conference of the Music Academy. He remarked, the Trinities, Thyagaraja, Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar and Shyama Sastri have reached the pinnacle of Carnātic Music. Prominence was given to Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar's compositions in the music concerts and in the discussion session in the morning, papers were presented dealt mostly with the different aspects of Muthuswamy Dikshītar's greatness. The morning session began everyday at the Music Academy with the rendering of 'Nottuswara Sahithyas' of Muthuswāmi Dīkshitar which were composed in Sanskrit language with western tunes. This was followed by the singing of Navagraha Kriti of the day and Navāvarana Kriti of Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar. Papers on the various aspects of Dīkshitar's greatness were presented by expert musicologists. In music and dance concerts, the performers strictly conformed to the renderings of Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar's compositions on the major part of their recitals. A valuable volume on Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar written and compiled by Dr. V. Raghavan, published by the National Centre of the Performing Arts, Bombay was released at the Music Academy Festival in connection with the birth bi-centenary of Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar. This volume consists of a detailed biography of Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar, his works, accounts of lives and works of Rāmaswāmy Dikshitar, Chinnaswāmy Dīkshitar, Bāluswāmi Dīkshitar, Subbarāma Dīkshitar and Ambi Dikshitar, a critical study on Muṭhuswāmy Dikshitar's compositions, their historical, theoretical

and aesthetic aspects, Dikshitar's Sishyaparampara, a very valuable Bibliography on the literature available on Muthuswāmy Dikshitar and an index for all the available compositions of Dikshitar and members of his family in print, from the year 1880. A musical discourse on the life and contribution of music by Muthuswāmy Dikshitar was also arranged in one of the morning sessions programmes at the Music Academy.

The Music Festival of *Tamil Isai Sangam* was inaugurated by Thiru. K. Rajaram, Minister for Labour, Tamilnāḍu. In his inaugural address, he said that the Tiruppugazh hymns of Saint Aruṇagirināthar should be popularised with special attention in connection with the sixth birth centenary of Aruṇagirināthar. Tmt. Balasaraswathi who presided said that the music and dance are not for mere entertainment but are meant for the realisation of God Almighty and Ānanda or Eternal Bliss. Musicians and dancers who took part in the music festival paid their homage by performing one or two Tiruppugazh hymns of Aruṇagirināthar in their concerts. Special mention has to be made for the Tiruppugazh hymns rendered by Tmt. M. L. Vasanthakumari. She devoted the latter part of her concert to the singing of Tiruppugazh hymns with a special orchestra consisting of a Veena, two Mrudaṅgams, a Kañjeera and Cymbals and accompanied by three singers.

Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiāh inaugurated the Music Festival of the *Indian Fine Arts Society*. He pointed out that the music is the only Art which remains unscathed even under foreign influences. He remarked that Music is a kind of worship and the listeners are transported from the mundane plane and enjoy Eternal Bliss when they hear good music. Tmt. M. S. Subbulakshmi who presided over the conference pointed out that Music has got an universal appeal and it is beyond language, community, and religion. She also said that Music is the only powerful medium through which people can be trained to worship God. Special concerts were arranged to pay homage to Muthuswāmy Dikshitar in connection with his birth bi-centenary. There were music and dance concerts in the evenings and in the nights.

Kalākshetra is another place where music festival was conducted on the out skirts of Madras city limits in the village, Tiruvanmiyur. A calm and peaceful atmosphere pervades her and music and dance come with a divine flavour from the auditorium. Every listener becomes absorbed in music and as Tmt. M. S. Subbulakshmi pointed out in her speech at Indian Fine Arts Society, the Art becomes the medium to evoke Bhakthi upon the audience and the performances are more for Ānanda than for mere entertaiment value. The gurukula system which has been emphasised by the Chief Minister of Tamiḻnāḍu Dr. Karunanidhi at the Music Academy is kept alive here. Dr. Malcolm Adiseshaiāh, Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University inaugurated the Art Festival at *Kalākshetra* and the Series consisted of music performances and dance-dramas.

REPORTS OF SEMINARS

WOMEN'S CULTURE—A SYMPOSIUM

In connection with the *International Women's Year*, the Institute of Traditional Cultures, Madras-5 held a Symposium at 4 P.M. on Wednesday the 19th November 1975 in Room No. 48 of the University Departmental Buildings when the following persons read papers on the topics indicated against each, under the Chairmanship of Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D.Litt., D.Phil (oxon) the Director of the Institute.

An audience of 72 persons was present.

Thiru M. Arunachalam, M.A., Director, Sanskrit, Tamil and other Languages Research Institute, Madras-28.	Women's Role in Traditional Culture of India as seen from History and Literature.
Tmt. S. Rajalakshmi, M.A., M.Litt., Assistant Professor of Tamil, Queen Mary's College, Madras-4.	Women in the Saṅgam Age.
Tmt. M. E. Saraswathi, M.A., M.Litt., Professor of Tamil, Quaid-E-Millath Government Arts College for Women, Madras-2.	Women in *Periyapurāṇam*
Dr. S. Sita, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Music, University of Madras, Madras-5.	Women's Role in the preservation of Carnatic music.
Tmt. Krishna Sanjivi, M.A.,B.T., Professor of Tamil, Queen Mary's College, Madras-4.	Women in Bhārathi and Bhārathi Dāsan's Works.
Selvi S. A. Durga, M.A., M.Litt.	Traditional Ideas in the Life of Modern Women.
Thiru S. Shanmugasundaram, M.A., Research Scholar, Tamil Dept., University of Madras, Madras-5.	Image of Women in Tamil Folklore.

The Chairman in his opening remarks emphasised the need to fully recognise the part played by Women in India since ancient times in the preservation of traditional practices and culture and called upon Thiru Arunachalam and others to read their papers.

THIRU M. ARUNACHALAM, M.A., *Director, Sanskrit, Tamil, and other Languages, Research Institute, Madras.*

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN INDIA, THROUGH HISTORY AND LITERATURE

The general picture painted by foreign writers about the status of women in India, and meekly accepted by our own writers, is that women were mere dolls for the pleasure of the men folk. They were said to have had no rights and no power and, at best, to have had only a subordinate position in society. This idea might have occurred to the writers naturally from their experience of their own land, its society and its culture. They cannot visualize that the picture can be different in India. In fact it was entirely different in India because India's past culture, was a culture which emphasized spiritual values, and where matters of the spirit were concerned, Indian Philosophy made no difference in sex. Woman was heir to all that man was heir to and so, enjoyed all the freedom, right and power that man possessed. The spread of Muslim influence in this country through Muslim invasion and conquest and conversion at the point of the sword did affect the position of women, Independence in women could not be respected or tolerated by the Muslim invaders of the period. Hence the Hindus who lived under Muslim subjugation had to restrict the freedom of their women; even those who did not remain under Muslim subjugation had to follow the prevalent custom elsewhere and thus was brought about the total restriction on women everywhere.

The religion of India had coloured all values, including the social, from the remote past. One of the chief religious tenets of the *Vaidika* religion of India is that there is no difference in the nature of the souls and that all souls are equal. The religion had been treating the sexes alike. In ancient Tamiḻnāḍu also,

the role of woman was one of freedom and independence. The rigidity of caste did not exist then. The Vēdas considered men and women as alike, until the age of the *smritis.* As society expanded, man who was the bread winner, who was the stronger, probably wished to restrict the independence of women; so he laid down an inferior role to women. The various *smritis* were all written by men; no *smriti* was written by a woman and so naturally man prescribed for himself a superior role. The role of women here in this land has to be examined in the background of this fact.

The three great forces—that of power, of property or riches and of knowledge, have been known as three Śaktis—Malaimagaḷ, Alaimagaḷ and Kalaimagaḷ in the Tamiḻ language. This is itself significant.

The following narration will give a cross-sectional picture of women in Indian Society with special emphasis on Tamiḻnāḍu.

The Grahalakshmi:

This term is very significant in Indian tradition. The lady of the house is the *grahalakshimi.* There is no corresponding term for the male counterpart. She is known as the *illaḷ* which is the Tamiḻ name; this has no masculine form; the form *illan* would mean the impoverished fellow. The very term symbolizes her legitimate role in society. In every day life in our homes we know that for all auspicious ceremonies like weddings, and also for all inauspicious ceremonies like funerals, man has no competence to perform any ritual without his wife. *A grahasta* always means the man with his wife. Śēkkiḻār says that it is the lady that is entrusted with the task of carrying on the 32 dharmas. The inscription of Naralokavīra in the days of Vikrama Coḻa (1118–33) in the Tiru Adikai temple, records his endowment for the performance of these 32 duties by the Śakti there.

The life of women has been from beginning to end one of sacrifice. The story of Bhāmati (9th century) is one of the most moving stories in all literature. Vaçaspati Miśra, steeped in Vēdic lore and philosophy, was writing his commentaries on the several *darśana* texts when he was married to the young girl Bhāmati. The young

scholar was so much enveloped in his work that he had no time even to look at his wife, even though she was cooking and serving his food and looking after his physical comforts. His writing was in due time completed, but both of them were now past sixty in years and had become old. Vaçaspati realised for the first time that he had a wife and that he had done her great injustice by not giving her the joys of a conjugal life. Her life had been one of continued service to her master and husband, without even a word or look from him. Out of remorse, the great philosopher named his writing Bhāmati, in the name of his wife and told her: " My dear, I have failed in my duty to you as a husband but you may have this writing as your child and this shall perpetuate your name as long as our language and our society last". The name Bhāmati is now the most well known and the most revered name in all Sanskrit lore. This is an unparalleled story of devotion and sacrifice. The stories of Vāsuki and similar others, are many.

Girl Children:

We do not have many pictures of the lives of girls in history or literature. The story of the two daughters of Paari in the Saṅgam period is a rare one. When the ruling chiefs of Tamiḷnāḍu joined together and killed Paari in battle, his friend, the poet Kapilar took charge of them and went to other chiefs asking them to wed the girls. Their single song on the death of their father and the loss of their hill is most heart-rending. Many later legends had grown around them. One speaks of their cooking gold into food for feeding a *pāṇa,* when rains had failed and no grain was available. Another relates the efforts of Avvai to get them married. Śēkkiḷār sings of the two daughters of Koṭpuli who were adopted by the Śaiva saint Sundara. Perumkathai speaks of a little girl in the forest, Virisikai, daughter of a hermit who was doing austere penances; the Prince Udayaṇan saw the child, played with her and decorated her hair with forest flowers. The little child kept the faded flowers for years and finally would wed no other but he who gave them to her. The story ends with Udayaṇan's marriage with her.

But the story of Attulay, daughter of the Vaishnava āchārya Periyanambi, is a very inspiring one. Periyanambi was ex-communicated by the Aiyaṅgārs of Śriraṅgam for having performed the funeral rites for Maraner-nambi, a harijan, his own colleague and disciple of his own ācharaya, Ālavandār. One particular day, Sri Raṅganātha was being taken round the streets in the temple chariot, in a festival procession. When the procession came in front of Nambi's house, the child Attulay who was smarting under the social excommunication ran out and swore on Raṅganātha: "Tell me if You approve of my father's action or not; otherwise, on Your head I swear, You shall not pass beyond our house." Raṅganatha said through the temple priest that He approved of Periyanambi's action and gave him the temple prasādams. This is a unique instance of a little child's bold action against the whole community, born out of love for her father.

A later legend states that Mināksbi, the presiding deity of Madurai, sat on the lap of the ruling Tirumalai Nāyak as his own daughter and honoured saint Kumaragurupara with a pearl necklace from Nāyak himself.

Marriage:

Monogamy was the rule as we find in all legends and stories. Compare also the remark of Sīta, when she wants Rāma to recall a promise he had made at the time of marriage; "O Hanumān, remind him of the words, I shall never touch another woman even in my thought, in this birth". But there were many cases of polygamy, mostly in royal houses where it was always a matter of political convenience. There are said to be eight types of alliances but the one universally prevalent in the Tamiḻnāḍu was some type corresponding to the *brahma maṇa,* where the parents of the boy and of the girl met together and fixed up the alliance. This is well illustrated by the Kovalan—Kaṇṇaki wedding described in some detail in *Śilappadhikāram* and by many others in the *Periyapurāṇam.*

Marriage was a sacred bond which can never be annulled; there was no question of divorce or widow re-marriage. In a

society where the goal of all life was considered *moksha,* a woman never sought a divorce nor a widow, re-marriage.

Widowhood :

Sati, or the wife giving up her life on the death of her husband was not prevalent in the early periods. True, we have some instances; for example, the queen of Bhūta Pāṇḍiya who wanted to end her life in the funeral pyre of her dead husband's body. Probably the custom of *sati* originated with the Rājaput clan, where the sword was held in high esteem and woman was also a property and an object of high esteem. The Muslim invasion might have made this an invariable custom among the Rājaputs, who never wanted their womenfolk to fall into the hands of others. It had apparently spread to the other classes of society from them. An exception was made in the case of a woman who had borne no child ; she was not expected to perform *sati.* The Desiṅgurājan ballad mentions the instance of *sati* in the heart of Tamiḻnāḍu at a very late period (early 18th century), of course among the Rājputs.

The Tirukkovalur inscription mentions the *sati* of Vānavanmādēvi, the queen of Sundara Cōḻa mother of Rājarāja Cōḻa, in the most wonderful lyric lines[7]; but such instances are rare. Of course a deeply devoted wife died the instant she learnt of the death of her husband. The classic instance is Kopperundēvi in *Śilappadhikāram* who fell down and breathed her last when she saw her husband king Neduñcheḻian give up his life, realising he had caused the death of Kovalan unjustly. The woman who gives up her life in *sati* is much lower in rank to such a wife. Sometimes we also learn, the widow was unwilling to give up her life but the relatives did not want her to live a life of widowhood and so pushed her into the funeral fire. Of course such instances might have been quite rare. *Sati* among the Jains was also prevalent in Karnāṭka. However Bhattabana the Sanskrit poet strongly condemned the *sati.*

Sati was prohibited by law in 1835 in the days of Lord Bentinck.

There had of course been widows in all classes. *Puranānūru* verses tell us that they submitted themselves to tonsure. This custom of tonsure might have been the case with the Buddhist nuns and then with the Jain nuns; now we find that to be the case with Christian nuns and nuns of the Rāmakrishna mission order. However, *smritis* do not appear to enforce it; Sri Vaishnava *samhitas* definitely prohibit it.

Widows were denied the right to property in the earlier periods. Historians have recorded that they were given the right first in Deccan and then, the north of India followed suit.

We find women had survived the death of their husbands and influenced the lives of the people. The story of Sembiyanmādēvi who lived for about 45 years after the death of her husband and of Maṅgammaḷ in later history have been referred to elsewhere. Social tradition and the religious environment had made such women lead a life of austere service to God and the temple. There had been many such women in history. Kandiyar in Jaina tradition who had sung many poems and had been the author of many interpolations in *Cintāmaṇi,* Veḷḷiyar in Śaivism who is said to have written the interpolations in *Periyapurāṇam,* and many nameless Brahmin women who had sung scores of religious ballad poems in Tamiḻ like the *Advaita-ōḍam* are instances.

Social Life:

Modesty and chastity were held to be the greatest virtues. And no-where in all history is there any piece of writing extolling those who had violated the standareds of these virtues. Family life and the rearing of children were considered to be the prime duties of woman. But it was she who shaped the lives of the children, the rulers and warriors of the country. The Saṅgham poetry gives many graphic pictures of this trait, History tells us that it was the mother of Sivāji, Jijābāi, who was responsible for evolving the personality of the young boy who later grew up to a great national hero, who threw up the most powerful challenge to the Mughal empire and who suecessfully moulded the Maharatta people into a nation.

The sense chivalry which we find in Western society in the early period, did really exist in India, particularly South India. In the Saṅgham age we find women like Avvai being addressed in the plural. In cultured society, a woman was never referred to in the singular. Again it is remarkable to find Śēkkiḻar using the word *avatāram* (incarnation) when referring to the birth of Paravai and Saṅgili, who later happen to marry Sundara. The The word *avataram* he uses only for Appar, Sambandar, Sundara and Caṇdēsa.

A Saṅgham episode regarding one Kannaki wife of Pēkan is quite revealing. For some reason, he had abandoned her. But all the eminent poets of the period advise him against this; they paint a moving picture of the agony of the abandoned Kannaki and beseech him to take her back. This is a remarkable instance to show that, quite against the later trend of abuse to women, the Saṅgham period was always quick to champion the woman's cause.

A peculiar aspect of the family life in India is the tension between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. This has been going on for several millennia and in the joint family set up which continues even in this age of the modern woman; this tension does not show any sign of ending. The most famous story is that of Sakkubāi. In the historical story of Mirabāi, in the legendary account of Gowri at Madura, and even in the account of Lallēśwari of Kashmir, the tangle between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law causes immense hardship to the latter. In all these cases the root cause is the difference in the religion of the two, Śaivism and Vaishnavism. Mirabāi sang her songs in praise of Krishna while Lallēśwari sang her songs in praise of Śiva. Lallēśwari (1400) is the only poet in North India who has sung on Śiva.

With relief we may turn from these tales of woe and misery to the account of Sembiyanmādēvi in the days of the Cōḻa empire in Tamiḻnāḍu. Her son Uttama Cōḻa who was on the Cōḻa throne (970–985) married five wives. All the five loved their mother-in-law not only dutifully, but also with a sense of great esteem and

reverence. They had together given endowments to the Sembian mādēvi temple for the celebration of her birth day festival on the star *Kēṭṭai* in the month of *Citrai.*

Women in Public Life

Legends say that, in the dispute between Śaṅkara and Mandana Miśra, the wife of the latter was chosen as the judge by both of them. This speaks volumes for her erudition, judgement and sense of fairness. We find women officers to be appointed as the administrators in the Tiruvaiyāru temple, built by the queen. She had equal power with the male officers appointed there. Such appointments continued from Rāja Rāja's days to the days of Kulottuṅga I, in whose reign we are given also the names of two such women officers. An inscription from Tiruvaiyāru records that a woman was then appointed in the days of Rāja Rāja to be a member of the village council for the administration of the village and its temple.

Many towns had come to be known by the names of women. The village which housed the temple of Kailāśanātha in the area between Tēvour and Sikkil in the Tañjāvūr district has been named after the illustrious queen Sembiyan mādēvi. Vānavan mādēvi a village in South Arcot district is named after Vānavan mādēvi, mother of Rājarāja. There are besides irrigation channels branching off from the Kāvēri named Sembiyan mādēvi vāykkāl, Mādēvadikal vāykkāl, Parāntakan mādēvadigaḷ vāykkāl and so on (along with Saraśvati vāykkāl and Pārvati vāykkāl).

Women in High Society:

We have inscriptional records of the Coḷa queens who enjoyed the highest freedom and power in various spheres of administration. Queen Sembiyan mādēvi seems to have been delegated the duty of the administration of temples on the death of Gaṇḍarāditta, by Ariñjaya his brother and successor to the throne and this position she had been having during the reign of several succeding monarchs also till her death in the 16th year of Rājarāja's reign. She had herself built ten temples, besides renovating others and lavishly endowing more and more.

Even as the Coḷa King was called Tiribhuvana Cakravarti, his several queens were called Ulagamuḷududaiyāḷ, Bhuvana muḷududaiyāl, Avani muḷududaiyāl and Dharaṇi muḷududaiyāl. Inscriptions record the fact that at coronation she was also given the abhishēka. In the Coḷa history alone we find that the queen sat on the throne with the king. Inscriptions and the *Rājarājan ulā* declare that the queen was crowned and she issued commands from the throne. She was also called a *Cakravartti.*

The Coḷa queens had the power to issue grants to temples in their own personal right. Rāja Rāja, records in the Tañjāvūr inscriptions 'the endowments given by us and by our ladies (queens)'.

A Kannaḍa inscription records that the queen of Vikramāditta, the Calukya ruler built a temple at Paṭṭaḍakkal to celebrate the victory of her husband secured over Kāñchi thrice. This is a fine temple with considerable architectural beauty. When Rāja Rāja built the Tañjavūr temple, his queen Danti Śakti Vidaṅgi known as Lokamādēvi, built the equally great Tiruvaiyāru temple out of her own funds. We find all the Coḷa queens for many generations deeply attached to this temple, as well as to the other temples in the neighbourhood such as Tiruneithānam, Kaṇḍiyūr etc. This was evidently because they had a feeling that the great Tiruvaiyāru temple was their own. The inscription of Lokamādēvi reads 'Let the gifts given by us to this temple built by us be engraved in stone'. This clearly indicates that the queen lays stress on her own acts at every stage.

Kundavai the elder sister of Rāja Rāja was responsible for many benefactions to temples in Rāja Rāja's days. The ladies appear to have been very liberal in their benefactions which included Vaishnava and Jain temples also. The Jinālaya at Tirumalai, Dadapuram (Rāja Rājapuram) and a place near Mannārguḍi may be mentioned.

Property rights of Women:

Epigraphical records are a valuable guide to the position of women in regard to the acquisition and ownership of property

and its disposal. Throughout the country we find women purchasing property in their own name and giving it away to the temples. An inscription of the 2nd century B. C. in Kaneri near Bombay during the Satavahana period, records an endowment by a mother for the welfare of her son. The British museum copper plates of Chārudēvi, records the independent rule of Chārudēvi as the Regent for the child, later Śivaskandavarma, and her benefactions. Raṅgapathākai the queen of Rājasimha herself built a temple in her own name and out of her own funds close to the present Kailāśanātha temple at Kāñcipuram when that temple was built by the king.

Heriosm of Women:

The battle field, as is generally supposed, has not been the sole preserve of men throughout history. We come across women who had entered the battlefield and fought like men, holding the bow and the sword. Kaikēyi in the Epic, took up the reins of the chariot, when the charioteer of King Daśaratha was felled by asura's arrow, and steered the chariot for the king in the battlefield and to victory. There are any number of stories about valiant women who made many sacrifices for the country, narrated in the Saṅgham poetry. Sultāna Razia is a historical figure who ruled from Delhi (1236–40). She ruled over the land bequeathed to her by her father and when occasion came, fought battles in the guise of a man; but was treacherously killed by her own Muslim nobles, who could not brook a woman's rule. Queen Maṅgammāḷ in our own country had to fight many battles and rule the land (1689—1706) on the death of her husband Chockanātha, the Nāyak King. She was also a great administrator and people of Tamiḻnāḍu fondly cherish her memory through her many public benefactions roads, chatrams, tanks and temples. The story of Tārābāi, who undauntedly opposed Auraṅgazeb in 1700 is equally well known. Lakshmibāi, the Rāṇi of Jhānsi assumed queenship in 1835 at the young age of 18 when her husband died and led the Independence struggle against the British in her area and died in 1858 in the guise of a soldier, of a bullet wound. The story of Alli of Madurai in Tamiḻnāḍu is one of the most famous legends. She was an amazon into whose State no man dared to enter. How she

was won over by Arjuna with the help of Krishna is one of the most favourite stories of Tamiḷnāḍu. The story of the Rājput nurse Panna, who sacrificed her own child in the place of the baby prince of the ruling dynasty, when the Muslims threatened to kill it, is a well known legend.

Women Poets :

Many had been women of letters of great renown. In Tamil literature, we have more than 30 poetesses in the Saṅgam age. Kākkai-pāḍini had been the name of many such and two of them had also been grammarians of repute. Who had not heard of Aṇḍāḷ and her bhakti poetry which, in a later day, evolved a Mirābāi in Chittore in North India? Poetesses of the name of Avvai have been many. Kings quailed before the ire of an Avvai of the Saṅgam age; she was an old woman who was sent even as an ambassador to another ruler's court. One Avvai is the greatest name in gnomic and ethical poetry; another ranks with Tiruvaḷḷuvar and the later day Siddhas in writing philosophical verses in the *kural* metre. Kāraikkāl ammai has sung the pure advaitic philosophy of the period in beautiful lyric poetry. The wives of Varakuṇarāma Pāṇḍiya, a Pāṇḍiya, ruler, and of Ellappa nāvalar, have been renowned as ladies with a fine literary perception. In our own day, we have seen Aśaḷāmbikai Ammāḷ who, though afflicated with a dire disease, has sung the biographies of Tilak and Gandhi as *purāṇas.*

In Sanskrit lore we have any number of women poets and seekers after Truth from the Vēdic times. Gargi was a spiritually evolved thinker who challenged Yagñavalkya in the court of Janaka. He was unable to answer her two questions. There was Atrēyi who studied under Vālmīki and Agasthiya. Another Atrēyi was the wife of Yagñavalkya. In the daily Brahmayāga, obeisance is made to Sulabha, Maitrēyi, Vatavaprasitēyi, Gargi and Vasagnavi. When Kumarakampanna successfully completed his Madurai expedition to expel the Muslim marauders, his wife Gaṅgādēvi wrote an account of the expedition in 600 verses in the Sanskrit language, called *Maduravijayam.* Tirumālamba wife of Achutarāya of Vijayanagar wrote the *Varadāmbika parinayacampu*, in prose and verse.

Ramabadhrāmba wife of Raghunāthnāyaka of Tañjāvur in the next century wrote the *Raghunātha abyudayam.* Similar instances in other languages are also many.

Music and Dances:

Probably these two were the arts in which women excelled men from the ancient past. Male and female *pāṇas*, called the *pāṇa* and *pāḍini*, some two thousand years ago, went about visiting the courts of princes and patrons enlivening their lives with song and dance, and getting lavish presents from them. They were not wandering mendicants but were a class of cultured and enlightened persons, dedicated to the two arts. They seem also to have enjoyed great privileges in the royal courts. After the Kalabhra rule at Madurai they happened to flourish under the patronage extended to them by temple grants, when they dedicated their song and dance to God. When Nambiyāṇḍār nambi in the days of Rāja Rāja Çoḷa wanted some artiste for setting the tunes to the Dēvāram, he was directed by divine guidance to an young *pāṇa* lady who hailed in the line of the *pāṇa* and his wife who accompanied Jñānasambandha with his *yaḷ*. This is very significant; the art of song (and dance also) was continued only by women. The story of Pāṇa-Bhadra's wife narrated in the *Tiruvilayāḍal Purāṇa* is well known. Lord Sundara, enshrined at Madurai, intervened to secure victory to her in a contest with a singer from outside the Pāṇḍiya territory.

History takes us to the days of Rāja Rāja who built no less than 400 houses for the women of the singing and dancing class who had dedicated themselves to the service of Lord Brahadiśvara at Tañjāvur. The houses were located on both sides of the four main streets in the Tañjāvur city. Here we may hazard a guess that the pāṇa class, which had great popularity and influence in the Saṅgham age, had almost lost its great culture of art and dance due to the Kalabhra suppression between 250 and 550 A.D., had gained a partial popularity and recognition through Jñānasambandha, Śēramān and Nambiānḍar nambi, and again had come into its own under Rāja Rāja I. These women were known as *tālippeṇḍugal*; they were real servants of God, dedicating their music and song

to the Divine Presence; probably due to lack of patronage they deteriorated into the popularly known *dēvadāsi* class of the decadent Nāyak period and Polygar period. The male members of the race were pipers in the temple and in society.

A few more words may also be said about these women. So long as they were unmarried they could be temple servants. But if they wanted to marry, they were permitted to go out of the temple service and settle down as family women. So long as they were in the temple, they led a life of extreme rigour and celibacy, something like the Vestal Virgins in Delphi in Greek mythology, although they were the exponents of the two arts dance and music. They were amply paid from the temples—a wage of 100 *kalams* of paddy annually, which was the rate for all the other temple servants also. These women had a very independent, saintly life; they owned property and have also liberally endowed some temples from their own funds: for example, we learn that one Peruntiruvāṭṭi Kayilaikkiḷattī of Temaṅgudi purchased 30 *vēlis* of wet land (200 acres) and donated it to the Vēdāraṇyam temple.

There is a rare instance of a queen who was a singer herself. *Kaliṅgattup-paraṇi* (early 12th century) records the fact that the Çoḷa emperor Kulottuṅga I was himself a great composer while his queen, herself known as Ēḷiśai Vallabhi (the mistress of the seven notes), sang his compositions.

Women and Bhakti:

In the religious sphere, women had always ranked equal with men. Queen Maṅgaiyarkkaraśi of Madurai had chosen to follow the Śaiva faith when the whole country along with her husband the king had been following an alien Jain faith. She had her own intelligence unit by the aid of which she heard of Jñānasambandha, the divine boy Saint in the distant Çoḷa country, invited him to her own land, and had the whole country and the king re-converted to the Śaiva faith, by love and devotion. This happened in the 7th century A.D. The achievement of this queen can be a source of pride and inspiration for womankind

for all time. Kāraikkāl ammai and Āṇḍāḷ, in Śaivism and Vaishnavism respectively, have sung very moving devotional songs which have been collected into the respective canons. Kāraikkāl ammai, an ordinary young house-wife of the Cōḻa territory had the unique honour or being called 'Mother' by the Supreme Śiva who has no father and no mother. No man had ever been known to have been addressed by God as 'Father'.

The wives of the Nāyanmārs, whom we meet in the Śaiva hagiology, the servant maid of Śiru-thoṇḍar, Sandana-naṅgai, Kumudavalli who caused the conversion of Tirumaṅgai mannan to Vaishnavism, Tilakavati sister of St. Appar but for whom the saint would not have evolved, Ponnāychi wife of the hunter Piḷḷai Uraṅgāvillidāsa, and a host of others, are all eminent women who lived a life of *bhakti* in the different faiths in Tamiḻnāḍu who can serve as beacon lights for humanity for all times. By their service, devotion, courage, resourcefulness and independence they have influenced the lives of the people around them.

The heroiśm of the young girl known as Uttaranallur maṅgai is of a different kind. Born as a Harijan girl in the 14th century on the banks of the Kāvēri, she loved a Brahmin boy, through whom she had learnt the Śāstras. When she proposed to marry him, the Brahmin elders could not tolerate it. When they set upon her Harijan colony with sticks and lighted torches, she rebuked them with her words which have come to be known as the Pāychalur ballad.

Women and Jñāna:

The *Jñānamārga* was not the special preserve of the men. Avvai, Kāraikkāl ammai, Aṇḍāl and many others have sung devotional and philosophical poetry which indicate their superior spiritual enlightenment. The Vaiśnava *guruparamparai* gives the stories of many ladies who were spiritually evolved. The wife of Tōlappar was one such lady. When he chose to insult the āchārya Nampiḷḷai in the temple, she would have nothing to do with him, because he had insulted the ācharya, for which sin, there was no propitiation possible. The story goes on that he sought the pardon

of the āchārya at his wife's instance. What I would like to point out here is, that this lady, although a very dutiful wife, had no second thoughts about giving up her husband when he committed the most unforgiveable sin of insulting an āchārya.

We have thus far drawn a picture of womanhood at its best during the last two thousand years and more. We have seen Vēdic women able to challenge great masters, women of intense devotion who had enriched the language with their melodious poetry, women who had entry into the presence of God, women, as able administrators, who have preserved for us all the best in our ancient culture and heritage through the construction and maintenance of temples and through making them the pivot of all social activity, heroic women giving up their lives joyfully on the battle field, and noble women courageously giving succour to their spouses in weal and woe. The purpose of these remarks is only to indicate that woman in Tamiḻnāḍu and in India had been an equal partner with man, partaking of life in its varied facets of the home, public life, religion, the arts and so on, without in the least losing her prime function as the light in the Home.

TMT. S. RAJALAKSHMI, *Assistant Professor of Tamil, Queen Mary's College, Madras.* next read her paper on

WOMEN IN THE AGE OF THE SAṄGAM

The age of the Saṅgam is generally assigned to the beginning of the Christian era. When many parts of the world and many nationalities were still in primitive conditions the Tamils of the age of the Saṅgam had attained a high level of civilization. Tamiḻ culture emphasised intellectual purity and honesty.

> "பெயக்கண்டு நஞ்சுண் டமைவர் நயத்தக்க
> நாகரிகம் வேண்டுபவர்"

—Tirukkuṛaḷ 580

In general the women of the age of the Saṅgam occupied an honourable position in society. Though there are no references to formal education, at least a good number of the ladies of the age should have been educated as is evident from more than twenty

five poetesses who appear in the Saṅgam classics. The number of the poetesses of the age is proof positive to show that the Tamils of that age never denied the benefit of education to their women folk. The number of the poetesses of the age of the Saṅgam compares favourably with the number of poetesses of the Rig Vēdic age. We hardly come across half a dozen ladies who composed of Rig Vēdic hymns.

Tolkāppiam mentions that the ladies of the age possessed qualities such as humility, calmness, strength of will and the ability, to distinguish between good and evil.

" செறிவும் நிறைவும் செம்மையும் செப்பும்
அறிவும் அருமையும் பெண்பா லான "

—*Tolkāppiam—Porul Sutram 15*

Definitely such qualities should have been acquired by the ladies through training and education. The ladies of the age had earned a name for their steadfast love towards their husbands, chastity and dutifulness. The education of the ladies should have been such as to give them training in household duties. It is likely that such training was available in the house itself, the parents being the mentors and tutors of the children at home. Whatever might have been the process of learning, there is no denying the fact that the rate of literacy among the ladies was high and their views and thoughts were accepted and respected.

The ladies of the age of the Saṅgam, seem to have been good at music and drama also apart from possessing a knowledge of the literature. Such of those ladies who possessed extraordinary intelligence at quite an young age, were referred to as the Mudukuṟaivi (முதுகுறைவி). In the *Silappadikāram* Kovalan refers to his wife Kaṇṇagi as the Sirumudukuṟaivi.

" சிறுமுதுக்குறைவிக்குச் சிறுமையும் செய்தேன் "

—*Silappadikāram*—Canto 16, line 68

thereby meaning that she was a wise woman, though quite young in age. Avvaiyār, one of famous poetesses of the age was respected for her wisdom by all the three crowned kings of the age. One of the chieftains offered her the myrobalan fruit,

believed to make one immortal, so that Avvai could live for many years and thereby make available her wise counsels to the Tamils.

“ பெருமலை விடரகத் தருமிசைக் கொண்ட
சிறியிலை நெல்லித் தீங்கனி குறியா
தாதா னின்னகத் தடக்கிச்
சாத னீங்க வெமக்கீந்தனையே ”

—*Purananūṛu* Stanza 91

Another poetess by name Kākkaippāḍiniyār is said to have been the authoress of two grammatical works, *Kākkaippāḍineeyam* and *S'iru Kākkaippāḍineeyam.*

In music, perhaps the ladies excelled the menfolk. The women by nature have a sweet voice even now and nothing prevents us from assuming that it was so in the age of the Saṅgam also. One incident described in one of Saṅgam classics would be a testimony to the attainments of the ladies in the art of music. While keeping watch over the crops, the Kaṇavan fell fast asleep due to consuming toddy. At that time, in came an young elephant. The wife of the Kaṇavan desirous not to disturb the sleep of her husband, sang in the Kuriñji tune. The sweet music from the melodious voice of the lady made the elephant go to sleep, forgetting the purpose for which it eṇtered the field.

“ ஒலியல் வார்மயிர் உளரினள் கொடிச்சி
பெருவரை மருங்கில் குறிஞ்சி பாடக்
குரலுங் கொள்ளாது நிலையிலும் பெயராது
படாஅப் பைங்கண் பாடுபெற் றொய்யென
மறம்புகல் மழகளிறு உறங்கும் நாடன் ”

—*Aganānūṛu* Stanza 102 lines5—9

In the Saṅgam works there are references to show that the ladies by their skill in music soothened the pain of the wounded warriors.

“ கொழுநர் மார்பின்
நெடுவசி விழுப்புண் டணிமார் காப்பென
வறல் வாழ் கூந்தற் கொடிச்சியர் பாடல் ”

—*Malaipaḍu Kaḍām* lines 302–4

These not only indicate the role of Music but also the skill of the ladies of the age. In the Saṅgam age there was a class of

professional musicians and dancers, called the Viraliyar. The Viraliyar in the company of the Pāṇar moved from place to place and gave performances.

In the age of the Saṅgam, we find parents offering prayers to Gods for the birth of both sons and daughters.

> " குன்றக் குறவன் கடவுட் பேணி
> இரந்தனன் பெற்ற எல்வளைக் குறுமகள் "

—*Aiṅkuṛunūṛu* Stanza 257 lines 1 & 2

This is in contrast to what we find in the age of Ṛg. Vēda. In the Age of the Ṛg. Vēda that birth of a daughter was not welcomed and prayers were offered for the birth of sons.

In the matter of marriage the ladies had freedom of choice. The Tamiḻs believed in the natural coming together of men and women and the ladies of the age sometimes gave their fair hand to the lad who succeeded in subduing the wild bull that was let loose.

> " கொல்லேற்றுக் கோடஞ்சு வாளை மறுமையும்
> புல்லாளே ஆயமகள் "

—*Kalittogai 103*

It was the practice to pay bride-price to deck the bride with choice ornaments.

> " தாமரைக்கு இறைஞ்சம் தண்டுறை ஊரன்
> சிறுவளை விலையெனப் பெருந்தேர் பண்ணிஎம்
> முன்கடை நிறீஇச் சென்றிசினோனே "

—*Naṟṟiṇai* Stanza 300 lines 4 to 6

The tasteful way in which the ladies adorned themselves led to their characterisation Sēyiḻai (சேயிழை) and Nēriḻai (நேரிழை). The married women were considered as the light of the house and as the mistress of the house. In the Tamiḻ language the terms Illāḷ (இல்லாள) and Manaiāḷ (மனையாள்) are used to denote the wife, which mean that the wife is the mistress of the house.

> " மனைமாட்சி இல்லாள்கண் இல்லாயின் வாழ்க்கை
> எனைமாட்சித் தாயினும் இல "

—*Tirukkuṛaḷ 52*

But the husband is not referred to in identical terms as Illān (இல்லான்) or Manaiān (மனையான்). It is proof positive to show that it was the wife who had the sole responsibility of managing the house.

> " தற்காத்துத் தற்கொண்டான் பேணித் தகைசான்ற
> · சொற்காத்துச் சோர்விலாள் பெண் "

—*Tirukkuṛaḷ, 56*.

Married women considered it their special duty to entertain guests even if it be dead of night.

> " அல்லில் ஆயினும் விருந்துவரின் உவக்கும்
> முல்லை சான்ற கற்பின்
> மெல்லியல் குறுமகள் "

—*Naṟṟiṇai*, Stanza 142, lines 9 to 11.

Hospitality was one of the virtues among the ladies of the age.

In the age of the Saṅgam the women of the Tamiḻ country, like Spartan women, were courageous and were prepared to make sacrifices for the sake of the State. The women of the warrior class were known Mūdin Magaḻir (மூதின்மகளிர்).

> " கெடுக சிந்தை கடிதிவ டுணிவே
> மூதின் மகளி ராத றகுமே "

—*Puranānūṟu*, Stanza 279, lines 1 & 2.

The Mūdin Magaḻir were so much imbibed in warlike spirit that they would not mind losing all the male members of the family including their young sons.

> " இன்றும் செருப்பறை கேட்டு விருப்புற்று மயங்கி
> வேல்கைக் கொடுத்து வெளிது விரித்துடீஇப்
> பாறுமயிர்க்குடுமி யெண்ணெய் நீவி
> ஒருமக னல்ல தில்லோள்
> செருமுக நோக்கிச் செல்கென விடுமே "

—*Puranānūṟu*, Stanza 279, lines 7 to 11.

The Mūdin Magaḻir would be overjoyed when they heard that their sons had died in battle facing the enemy than when they heard that their sons had died as a result of the wounds on their backs.

" செங்களந் துழவுவோள் சிதைந்துவே றாகிய
படுமகன் கிடக்கை காணூஉ
ஈன்ற ஞான்றினும் பெரிதுவந் தனளே "

—*Puranānūṛu*, Stanza 278, lines 7 to 9.

Though the wife was considered as the mistress of the house, the moment she lost her husband she lost her respectable position in the family. Hence some of them preferred to immolate themselves with the dead body of their husbands. If they did not commit *sati* they had to lead a miserable life. (*Puranānūṛu*, Poem-246).

The widow had to discard all her ornaments and even had her head completely shaven. (*Puranānūṛu*, Poems 25, 250, 261 and 280).

She had to content herself with simplest food consisting of rice kept overnight and cooked greens. Some widows had to eke out their livelihood by spinning cotton yarn and they were therefore known as Paruththippeṇḍir. (*Puranānūṛu*, Poems 125 and 326).

Such state of affiars was perhaps due to the denial of any share in the property of their husbands. There is practically no evidence to show that the ladies in the Saṅgam age had a right to the property or that they owned property in their names.

Another aspect of Saṅgam society was the presence of the courtesans, known as *Parathayar*. From the numerous references to them it looks as though the Parathayar were considerable in number. The frequent wars among the Tamils, perhaps led to the decrease in the number of men as against the number of women and in consequence the population the women was more than men. In this situation it was perhaps difficult for certain number of women to get married and they took to singing and dancing as their profession. Whatever be the reason for the presence of the courtesans, their presence was a slur on the Tamil society of the age. Viewed from what has been described above, the position of women in general was honourable, but they had no property or political rights in the age of the Saṅgam.

TMT. M. E. SARASWATHI, M.A., M.Litt., *Professor of Tamil, Government Quaide Millath Arts College for Women, Madras* next read a paper on—

WOMEN IN *PERIYAPURĀṆAM*

This year is celebrated as International Women's Year on a resolution of the United Nations Organisation. The specific objetives of celebrating the International Women's Year are (1) promotion of equality between men and women and (2) full integration of women in promotion of world peace. Before women give out their best for the promotion of world peace they should first obtain economical growth, social growth and a high standard of cultural growth. If they attain these, the world will recognise them politically also and then, half the administrators of the world would be women. There had been many women in the past who had glorified themselves by their acts. Let us confine ourselves to the famous women of *Periyapurāṇam.*

It is a well established fact that more than half the population of the world is women. If the position of the half of this population is left uncared for, it will be like a man having paralytic attack on one side of his body. If a country is to be civilised and free, the womenfolk must be given equal status with men. Poet Bhāratidāsan is of this opinion. He says,

"பெண்ணடிமை தீருமட்டில் பேசும் திருநாட்டில்
மண்ணடிமை தீர்ந்துவரல் முயற்கொம்பே"

So it is evident, that the high status of women in social and cultural set up is essential for a country's civilised tradition. It is also equally important from the spiritual point of view. Fully aware of this fact, Çēkkiḻār, the author of *Peripapurāṇam*, the epic of Śaivites, undoubtedly brings out truth that the role of women in society in all walks of life is very important.

There are 44 women characters in *Periyapurāṇam.* The period of 63 Nāyanmārs should be deemed as the proper period of these women. As St. Sundarar mentions a list of the 63 Nāyanmārs, it goes without saying that all women lived either before St. Sundarar or during his time.

Çēkkiḷār has high regard for pious women and refers to them with great reverence. The names of women in *Periyapurāṇam* end with 'ar' which denotes respect—Isaigñāniyār, Pāravaiyār, Sankiliyār, Māthiniyār, Tilakavathiyār, Punithavathiyār, Mañgaiyarkkarasiyār and so on. Not only 'ar' is suffixed to names but also to words defining the relationships of persons while referring to the wives and daughters of Nāyanmārs and women in general.

Manaivi	—	Manaiviyār	—	wife
Makal	—	Makaḷār	—	daughter
Mathar	—	Matharār	—	Women.

The charm of beauty of women is well brought out by the author. All women are compared with Tirumagaḷ. We cannot find a single instance where women being treated with disrespect.

Çēkkiḷār welcomes the birth of a girl child. He says that the wife of St. Mānakkañchārār gave birth to a daughter who would help him to free himself from the cycle of birth and death.

"இழைக்கும் வினைப்பயன் சூழ்ந்த இப்பிறவிக் கொடுஞ்சூழல்
பிழைக்கு நெறி தமக்குதவப் பெண்கொடியைப் பெற்றெடுத்தார்"

This itself is a deviation from the usual belief that only a male child could help one in attaining salvation. Śivanēsa Çeṭṭiyār was highly pleased and welcomed the birth of his girl child, Poompāvai, whom he regarded as a gift from God of which he could be proud of.

Marriage and Social customs:

The women in *Pēriyapurāṇam* hailed from different castes and communities, high and low. It was the custom of the people of all castes to marry within their own caste. However, it was not always the case with the devotees who were not bound by earthly considerations. There are references in *Periyapurāṇam* to the three different kinds of marriages namely endogamy, polygamy and inter-caste love marriage. Many marriages we read in *Periyapurāṇam* were arranged marriages. The endogamous restriction was prevalent in those days. Among so many factors that were discussed in settling the marriage alliance, caste was the most important.

Tilakavathiyār, of Vellāla caste was betrothed to one Kalippagaiyār of the same caste. St. Karaikkālammaiyār, St. Gñānasambandar and daughter of St. Mānakkañchārār had married in the same caste. We find cases of inter-caste marriage also in *Periyapurāṇam.* The marriage of St. Sundarar of Ādiśaiva caste with both Paravaiyār of Uruttirakaṇikai caste and Çankiliyār of Vellāla caste was not only inter-caste love marriage but also bigamy. Paramathathan, the husband of Kāraikkālammaiyār married a second wife. Now, bigamy is an offence.

In *Periyapurāṇam* we find the different castes following more or less the same order of marriage rites. The marriage rites that are found in this work are mostly Vedic rites. An elaborate description of marriage rites are given in full detail. Sometimes the marriage was celebrated without any ceremony under extraordinary circumstances under the leadership of some well known persons before God. The marriage of the daughter of Taman was celebrated under the presidentship of St. Gñānasambandar before God without any ceremonial rites.

> "மங்குல் தவழ் சோலைமலி புகலி வேந்தர்
> மணம் புணரும் பெருவாழ்வு வகுத்துவிட்டார்"

Though Cēkkiḻār in his elaborate description of marriage ceremonies has not mentioned the important function of tying *tāli,* yet we find references in *Periyapurāṇam* to married women wearing *tali.* The wife of St. Kunkiliyakkalaiya Nāyanar offered her *tāli* to her husband to buy paddy when they were in bitter poverty.

> "கோதில் மங்கலநூல் தாலி கொடுத்து நெற்கொள்ளும் என்றார்"

This *tali* is referred to as *Mangala-Nūl-tāli,* meaning the *tāli* filed in the sacred thread. From this it is evident that the *mangala nūl,* the sacred thread is very auspicious and that it should not be removed, whereas the *tali* which is filed in the sacred thread could be removed.

Position of widows:

The position of widows in society on the whole, has not been satisfactory and their lot was very pitiable. They were to lead a

life which was so horrible and tyrannising. Because the widowed life was so horrible, the women in those days preferred *Suttee* which means the act of burning alive of a widow on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband. This practice of *Suttee* is mentioned in *Periyapurāṇam.* Widows in *Periyapurāṇam* either committed *Suttee* or led an ascetic life. We find that women in *Periyapurāṇam* believed that by committing *Suttee* they could live with their husbands in the other world, and thus their committing *Suttee* was not due to the terrifying nature of widowed life. The very face that Tilakavathiyār lived, for the sake of her brother, of courst an ascetic life, clearly shows this. Māthiniyār, mother of Tilakavathiyār, committed *Suttee,* because she could live with her husband for ever in the other world.

Now, let us see the great role played by women in *Periyapurāṇam.* They played a very striking and important part in the household as well as in religious and political activities. In *Periyapurāṇam* we find able and intelligent women. Though these women had not had the type of education which we have now, they seemed to possess a good knowledge of the world and were not lacking in diplomacy and other things. In fact the three gems, Maṅgaiyarkkaraśiyār, Tilakavathiyār and Kāraikkālammaiyār are worth mentioning here. Two of them saved our religion from peril with great diplomacy and ability and the third was a great devotee who composed beautiful devotional songs. Most of the women *Periyapurāṇam* occupied a very important position in the household.

The main household duty of the women in *Periyapurāṇam* was to feed the devotees of Śiva. Their enthusiasm and sincerity in feeding the devotees are well brought out in his work. The duty of entertaining the guests rests mainly on the household women and it seems that they need not wait to get their husbands' permission. Moreover, the devotees were entertained before their husbands were fed. St. Kāraikkālammaiyār fed the devotee who came to her house before her husband, Paramathattan, returned home from his working place. The main aim of feeding the devotees before others in the family, is to serve them with whatever

food that was readily available, without making them wait and preparing a grand lunch, for, by the time the food was ready the hunger would have abated and the very purpose of feeding them would be lost. St. Kāraikkālammaiyār seemed to have known this fact very well and so she served the devotee with rice and one of the mango fruits, sent by her husband, as a side dish was not then ready when the hunger-stricken devotee came and asked for food.

"கறியமதங்குதவாதே திருவமுது கைகூட"

"இல்லாளன் 'வைக்க' எனத் தம்பக்கல் முன்னிருந்த
நல்லநறு மாங்கனிகள் இரண்டினில் ஒன்றைக் கொண்டு
....
அல்லல் தீர்ப்பவர் அடியார்தமை அமுதுசெய்வித்தார்"

The duties of the household were done with the advice of the women. They seemed to be very practical minded and gave timely advice to their husbands in times of need. The timely wisdom of the wife of St. Ilaiyāṅkuḍimāranār suggesting to her husband to go to their paddy field and to collect the seedlings that had been sowed that day for preparing a palatable lunch with only tender greens and rice thus recovered, and her receiving devotees with warm and cordial hospitality despite her bitter poverty, clearly shows her ability in running the house efficiently and her excellence and freedom in the household.

If the husband is found to be morally weak it is the duty of the wife to correct him. St. Tiruneelakaṇṭar behaved as a man of weak character. His wife being a modest woman with high moral values could not tolerate this as his character was quite contradictory to the sacred Śaiva principles and a challenge to tenets of Śaivism. She resolved to rise to the occasion and check him even in the beginning. That determination resulted in the sacrifice of her passions and feelings even at an early age. She swore in the name of Tiruneelakaṇṭam and told him 'don't touch us'. This was a shock to the husband whose eyes were opened. She did not tell don't touch '*me*', but '*us*'. The use of the plural made him stand stunned and resolve not to touch the whole female sex thereafter.

"தீண்டுவீராயின் எம்மைத் 'திருநீலகண்டம்' என்றார்"
"....................எம்மை என்றதனால் மற்றை
மாதரார் தமையும் என்தன் மனத்தினும் தீண்டேன் என்றார்"

Had it not been for her he would not have had the occasion to became a saint.

Some women in *Periyapurāṇam* were very submissive and thought that the duty of the chaste women was to obey their husbands even though they asked them to do very unreasonable and objectionable things. St. Iyarppagaiyār (a foe of nature) which name rightly suggests his character, was a person who had a passionate love and devotion to bhakthas. He never uttered the word 'No' to any devotee who came to his house. St. Sundarar makes a reference to this in his Tiruttoṇḍattogai "இல்லையே என்னாத இயற்பகை". When Lord Śiva came in the guise of a devotee and asked for his wife, he immediately offered her to him. The wife of Tiruneelanakkar did not utter a word against her husband when he left her alone in the temple just because she had blown off the spider that fell on the image of God.

"சிலையினார் திருமேனிமேல் விழுந்ததோர் சிலம்பி"

"விழுந்த போதிலங் கயல்நின்ற மனைவியார் விரைவுற்று
எழுந்த அச்சமொடு இளங்குழவியில் விழுஞ்சிலம்பி
ஒழிந்து நீங்கிட ஊதிமுன் துமிப்பவர் போலப்
பொழிந்த அன்பினால் ஊதிமேல் துமிந்தனர் போக"

This action, he thought as an act of sacrilege against God, even though she did it merely out of motherly affection. St. Kaliyār tried to sell his wife to buy oil to light lamps in the temple to which his wife did not seem to have objected in the least.

"செப்பருஞ்சீர் மனையாரை விற்பதற்குத் தேடுவார்"

Thus, this offering, abandoning and selling of the wives by their husbands seemed to be in vogue in those days. They are now considered to be on offence.

St. Mangaiyarkkaraśiyār had done yeoman service by reviving Śaivism in Pāṇḍināḍu. The, native religion Śaivism, was gradually losing its hold on account of the coming in of Jainism into

Tamiḻnāḍu. This Jainism continued to have a strong hold on the Tamilians until about 7th century A.D. A few Nāyanmārs had to struggle hard to bring about the revival of Śaivism which in effect put an end to the dominance of Jainism. We are indeed very proud to say in this connection that for this revival of Śaivism, two women were specially responsible. The contribution to the revival of Śaivism by two women, Maṅgaiyarkkaraśiyār in the South and Tilakavathiyār in the North was not small either in quality or in quantity. Paṇḍināḍu was ruled by Kūn-Paṇḍiyan alias Ninraçīr-Neḍumāṛan, a Śaiva by birth. Owing to the great influence of Jainism Neḍumāṛan became a convert to that religion. As is the King, so are the people. The rapid speed at which Jainism spread throughout Paṇḍināḍu during his reign appeared as though Śaivism, the native religion, was once and for all rooted out. At this critical juncture, Maṅgaiyarkkaraśiyār, the consort of King Neḍumāran, with the help of Kulaççiṛaiyār, the Minister, championed the cause of Śaivism.

"............செல்வப் பாண்டிமா தேவியாரும்
குரைகழல் அமைச்சனராங் குலச்சிறையாரும் என்னும்
இருவர்தம் பாங்கும் அன்றிச் சைவமங் கெய்தாதாக"

Though the king had a staunch faith in Jainism there was absolute religious toleration in the country. Even though there was absolute religious toleration, the queen never revealed her leanings to Śaivism to the King.

"ஓங்கிய சைவ வாய்மை ஒழுக்கத்தில் நின்ற தன்மை
பூங்கழற் செழியன் முன்பு புலப்படா வகை கொண்டுய்த்தார்"

She was patiently waiting for a chance to bring round the king to her own conviction. She heard the glad news of St. Gñānasambandar's arrival at Tirumaṛaikkāḍu. She with immense joy sent messengers to inform him that Paṇḍināḍu was under the sway of Jainism and the king also followed the faith and requested him to come to Madurai. He accepted the invitation and started the journey to Madurai with his devotees. Here the diplomacy of the queen was of a high order. Her patience was of a superior nature. She waited long for the time of maturity. St. Gñānasambandar came into the picture. The iron was hot. She struck,

When St. Gñānasambandar on entering Madurai, asked the Minister where the temple was, the Minister pointing out the tower of the temple said that was the temple. Seeing the tower, he sang in praise of God, a Pathigam (decad) of Ālavāy, starting with the word Maṅgaiyarkkaraśi which has got a special significance, namely the recognition, of the strong conviction of the queen and of the renaissance of Śaivism to her.

"மங்கையர்க் கரசி' வளவர்கோன் பாவை
வரிவளைக்கை மடமானி
பங்கயச் செல்வி! பாண்டிமாதேவி!"
'செந்துவர் வாயாள் சேலன கண்ணாள்
சிவன் திருநீற்றினை வளர்க்கும்
பந்தணை விரலாள் பாண்டிமாதேவி'

When she met him in the temple, she exclaimed that she and the country were fortunate to receive him. The boy saint told her that he came to see her, who was doing wonderful service to retain Śaivism in Paṅḍinādu in the midst of the opponents.

" சூழுமாகிய பரசமயத் திடைத்
தொண்டு செய்து வாழும் நீர்மையீர் "

The Jains who were enjoying the royal privilege and confidence so far, fore-saw danger and defeat, on the arrival of the famous Śaiva saint. Full of anger and anguish, jealousy and hypocrisy the Jains tried to infuriate the king that a Śaivite had came to his city all of a sudden.

" மாவலாய்! உன்தன் மதுரையிற் சைவவேதியர் தாம்
மேவலால் இன்று கண்டு முட்டியாம் "

The king could not but feel sorry over this coming of the boy Saint to his country without his knowledge.

" நன்று நல்லறம் புரிந்தவா நான் "

The Jains told the king that the saint had come there to conquer them in argument and their determination to drive him out of the city by setting fire, by their power of incantations to the mutt where the Saint and his devotees were staying. He gave them permission to do so if that was the only possible way to drive him out of the city. After they had left, the king was

feeling sad. The queen saw him in great distress and when she asked him the reason therefor she was informed of the whole affair. The queen who was awaiting this opportunity told the king that he could join the side which would come out successful.

> " அன்னவர் வாதுசெய்தால் வென்றவர் பக்கஞ்சேர்ந்து
> துன்னுவ துறுதியாகும் சுழிவுறேல் மன்ன, என்றார் "

This suggestion was sagacious, peaceful, timely and mature. No other better course of action would have been thought of at that moment. The king though a protagonist, could not but accept her proposal. Thus she steered clear the ship of the State at a critical juncture.

Though her staunch faith in Śaivism brought that saint to Madurai, that faith did not make her blind to the fear that the Jains might not hesitate to do harm to the saint. In case the boy saint was put to death she decided to commit suicide.

> " ஞானசம்பந்தர் தம்பால் நன்மையல்லாது செய்யும்
> ஊனம் வந்தடையில் யாமும் உயிர்துறந் தொழிவ தென்றார் "

This was the only course of action open to her, since she took the initiative in inviting the saint and she felt she was responsible for any possible untoward repercussions.

The Jains tried to set fire to the mutt by their power of incantations but in vain. Enraged by their failure they actually set fire to the mutt. The saint ordered the same fire to catch hold of the king, slowly stage by stage. The king should not die, lest the queen would become an unfortunate widow. Hence slowly, the heat of the fire got itself transferred into a consuming fever and the king began to suffer terribly. The Jains tried to cure him but in vain. He, in anger shouted at them to get out. The queen alone was near him. As the time was opportune she rose to the occasion. The king was badly in need of help. The queen struck the note of help. She told him that the boy saint might be able to cure not only his physical pain but the pain caused by vicious circle of births and deaths.

> " பையவே சென்று பாண்டியற்கா கெனப் பணித்தார் "

"பாண்டிமா தேவியார் தமது பொற்பில் பயிலு
நெடுமங்கல நாண்பாதுகாத்தும்...பையவே செல்க என்றார்"

"........வளர் வெண்திங்கள்
மேயவேணியார் பால் ஞானம் பெற்றவர் விரும்பி நோக்கில்
தீய இப்பிணியே யன்றிப் பிறவியும் தீரும் என்றார்"

Here we see her promptness and shrewdness. The king gave his consent and the boy saint was brought there. The Jains wanted to cure the left side of the king and the saint to cure the right side. He agreed to this and requested them to start the treatment. They started. The boy saint won and the Jains failed miserably. The king felt relieved of his pain on the right side but the pain was acute on the left. Unable to endure the whole pain on the left side he requested the saint to cure the left side also to which he readily obliged and came out successful. The king became a Śaivite.

The Jains though crest-fallen, challenged the Śaivites to compete with them in other fields. Accordingly they had அனல் வாதம் புனல் வாதம் *i.e.* the contests of putting their principles written on palm leaves in fire and in water. The winner was to be the one whose leaf is fresh in fire and goes against the stream in water. In these two contests also it became evident the Jains and defeat were wedded together. It is to be noted here that the queen was present throught the contests. Çēkkiḻār was all praise for her.

"மங்கையர்க்குத் தனியரசி எங்கள் தெய்வம்"

"தென்னர்குலப் பழிதீர்த்த தெய்வப் பாவை"

"இருந்தமிழ் நாடுற்ற இடர்நீக்கித் தங்கள்
பொங்கொளி வெண்திருநீறு பரப்பினாரை"

Thus she was out and out responsible for the reniassance of Śaivism in Paṇḍya country. She was a great patriot, an able diplomat and a staunch Śaivite. Her unshakable faith in Śaivism guided her on the road of sure success. Indeed she is a load star that shines for ever.

Like St. Maṅgaiyarkkarasiyār, Tilakavathiyār was indirectly responsible for the revival Śaivism in Toṇḍaināḍu. She had a

brother by name Maruḷneekkiyār later known as St. Tirunāvukkaraśar. But for his sister, we would have lost him who was one of our gems, a marvellous Saint. Though he was a Śaivite by birth, he became a convert to Jainism. His successful trip to Pātālīputra to study Jainism won him the title Darmasēnar. After the death of Tilakavatiyār's parents and her would be husband Kalippagaiyār, she lived only for the sake of her brother. When she heard the news of her brother's conversion to Jainism, she a helpless widow, went to Tiruvatigai and prayed to Veeraṭṭānēswarar day in and day out to bring her brother back to Śaivism.

> "தூண்டு தவ விளக்கனையார் சுடரொளியைத் தொழுதென்னை
> ஆண்டருளும் நீராகில் அடியேன் பின் வந்தவனை
> ஈண்டு வினைப் பரசமயக் குழிநின்றும் எடுத்தாள
> வேண்டுமெனப் பலமுறையும் விண்ணப்பம் செய்தனரால்"

Her prayers were heard. Of course more things are wrought by prayers. God answered her prayers in her dreams and said that he would make him suffer from a disease called Sūlai and that would bring him back to Śaivism.

> "மன்னுத போதனியார்க்குக் கனவின்கண் மழவிடையார்
> உன்னுடைய மனக்கவலை ஒழிநீ......
> அன்னவனை இனிச் சூலைமடுத்தாள்வம் என அருளி"

Accordingly, her brother was attacked by that disease. The Jains tried their level best to cure him but failed miserably. This unbearable pain forced him to go back to his sister for, the time was drawing near when the gracious looks of Lord Śiva were to be bestowed on him. He came to his sister and addressed her as the embodiment of all the piety of the family and requested her to show him some way of getting rid of the pain and the unceasing bondage of life.

> "வந்தணைந்து திலகவதியார் அடிமேலுற வணங்கி
> நந்தமது குலஞ்செய்த நற்றவத்தின் பயனனையீர்
> உய்ந்து கரை ஏறுநெறி உரைத்தருளும் என உரைத்து"

She gave him the sacred ashes and took him to the temple where he sang the *pathigam* in which he explains in detail the pains he

suffered. He got rid of the pain as if some miracle had worked on him. From thence onwards he was known as St. Nāvukkaraśar. As a result of that disease only, he was brought back to Śaivism.

Mahēndra Pallava, the king, an ardent Jain by conviction, made St. Nāvukkaraśar undergo certain ordeals at the instigation of the Jains. He was subjected to untold difficulties such as poisoning, throwing into a lime kiln, trampling by elephant and struggling in the rough sea with dead weight of a stone round his neck. He came out unhurt by the grace of God. The Pallava king was shocked but surrendered, and thus he became a Śaivite. Then he demolished all the Jain *pāzhigal* and temples in Pātaliputra and built a Śaiva temple called Gunapareeççuram at Tiruvatigai.

"பல்லவனுந் தன்னுடைய பழவினைப் பாசம் பறிய
வல்லமணர் தமைநீத்து மழவிடையோன் தாளடைந்தான்"

"வீடறியாச் சமணர் மொழி பொய்யென்று மெய்யுணர்ந்த
காடவனும் திருவதிகை நகரின் கண் கண்ணுதற்குப்
பாடலிபுத்திரத்தில் அமண் பள்ளியொடு பாழிகளும்
கூட இடித்துக் கொணர்ந்து குணபர ஈச்சர மெடுத்தான்"

Since he was converted to Śaivism, his country, Toṇḍaināḍu, followed the faith of Śaivism. So from all these it may be concluded that in all respects she was responsible for bringing back Śaivism in Toṇḍaināḍu.

It is no exaggeration to say that the very existence of the native religion Śaivism in Tamiḻnāḍu today is on account of these two women. Since the very native religion of the country was saved by these women, it is crystal clear that women folk are capable of determining the country's fate and it is actually happening today under the able guidance of our Prime Minister Tirumathi Indra Gandhi.

Among all the women in *Periyapurāṇam* St. Kāraikkālammaiyār was the only woman saint who made great contribution to Śaiva

Literature. In the case of this Saint, the character of religious devotion and the authorship of mystic poetry are found in one and the same person which is a rare feature. In ideals, lofty idealogies, powerful language, strong autobiographical touches and other literary merits, St. Kāraikkālammaiyār is unparallelled. From the mystic mind of St. Kāraikkālammaiyār flowed the *Arputa-tiruvantāti*, *Tiruviraṭṭaimaṇimālai*, besides the two *Mūttatirup-patigams*. They are included in the eleventh *Tirumuṛai*.

St. Kāraikkālammaiyār is of firm opinion that only through divine love, we can reach God and this we see throughout her works. Even in the beginning she had laid stress on divine love and its result. Her philosophy is presented very clearly. Her conception of God is undoubtedly a very high one (i.e.) God is one. He is all the five elements—the water, earth, fire, wind and sky and all wise and everything. He takes the form the devotee imagines. He is easy to approach by His seekers. He is visible in the minds of His seekers with divine love ;in the form of light. God is our refuge and strength and is readily present to help us in trouble. God is light. If fine literature is the result of high imagination and divine experience, then *Arputatiruvan-tāthi* of St. Kāraikkālammaiyār is undoubtedly one such fine literature.

Thus from all this, it is evident that women in *Periyapurāṇam* on the whole played an important role excepting some household women about whom much information is not available. The women in *Periyapurāṇam* understood the purpose of life as well as their men-folk and it is this clear and correct attitude to life and a common value of things in the world that made it possible and feasible for the saints of *Periyapurāṇam* to become the indivi-duals of the Śaivite way of life. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to state that the women of South India, as represented by the women of *Periyapurāṇam*, have attained a permanent place of honour and adoration as women with clear ideas on life who led the life of an ideal housewife.

DR. S. SEETA, M.A., Ph D., *Head of the Department of Music, Madras University* next read her paper on—

ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PRESERVATION OF CARNĀTIC MUSIC DURING THE LATE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Historical tradition is replete with references to women's singular contribution to the development of fine arts. Down the ages, India has produced women of immense stature from all parts of the country and different communities and social strata. These comprise saints, seers, poets and musicians, all gifted with extra-ordinary moral, spiritual and intellectual powers. Their living thoughts and experiences have gone into the texture of India's civilization.

The Indian concept of women is that she is an embodiment of Cosmic Power or Śakti. Women are creators of life and also sustainers of it through the various vicissitudes of its existence. The musical genius of our women has all along found varied expression as composers, songsters, instrumentalists, dancers, actors and so on. It is well known that the wife of the Rig-vedic priest accompanied the ritual by providing the Vīna music. *Gārgi*, the wife of sage *Yāgñavālkya* attained *mōksha* on account of her proficiency in Vīna playing. The Vīna is synonymous with Goddess Saraswati, the presiding deity of Music and Learning. It is striking to note that Vīna the national instrument of India happens to be this divine instrument. Music proceeding from the Vīna is soft and melodious like that of a women's sweet voice. According to Bharata, women's voices endowed with natural sweetness, are suitable for songs while men's voices characterised by vigour is meant for recitatives. A woman's voice satisfies the vital requirements postulated by Bharata such as *Mādhurya, Śrāvaka, Snigdha, tṛisthānaśōbhi madhura* and *rañjaka,* in his *Nāṭya Śāstra*. Perhaps this is the field where women do not claim equality with men, as they have been placed in an enviable position by the Almighty Himself, in having been blessed with a ringing voice, the attractive medium through which music flows out. Dance is a consummation of all arts, music, painting and sculpture. In addition to her natural

gifts of beauty of form and qualities that pure dancing demands, the dancer should have an uncanny feeling for music, and an artist's sensibility to the significant line and a sculptor's approach to them. Endowed with the natural and ideal characteristics, women have always been practising the twin arts of Music and Dance with great devotion and success since very early times. Rightly have they occupied a unique place in the cultural history of a nation as custodians of fine arts down the ages. Sculptural and literary evidences of the different periods prove once for all that women were proficient in playing not only stringed but also on wind and percussion instruments such as Flute, Kombu, and drums of various kinds. Further, girls playing on Kōlāṭṭam are depicted in sculptures in the mantapam in front of the Naṭarāja shrine at Pērūr, in temples at Rāmēśwaram, Āvaḍaiyārkovil and Tāḍpatri.

The contribution of women to the cause of Carnātic music may be dealt with under the following headings :—

(a) Women in the sphere of devotional and folk music.

(b) Women poets, composers, musicians and dancers in Courts.

(c) Women professional artists in the different spheres.

Bhakti being the main-spring of Indian Music, religious music has always held a special attraction for women. Many gifted women composed sacred hymns that formed part of Rig Vēda. Considered as symbols of purity, religiousness and spirituality, women were regarded rightly as custodians of our national culture and competent determine the details of religious rituals and ceremonies more authoritatively than the professional priest. Mention must be made of *Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār*, *Ānḍal*, (the saint composer of those beautiful hymns in Tamil, *Tiruppāvai*), *Avvaiyār*, the author of *Āttiçūḍi* and *Konṛaivēndan*, the great Vaishnava soul, *Mīrā Bai* and her soul stirring bhajans, *Jana bai* of Mahārāshtra, the author of abhangas, and *Rabia*, the woman mystic and a sufist. All religious functions are accompanied by devotional songs, ritual songs, worship songs, sung by the women folk. The anonymity of folk literature has always afforded women a powerful outlet for their feelings. Folk songs are again the privileged possessions

of the women of a country. Many are the songs and rhymes current in the countryside which are compositions of women. These, besides giving pleasure to the housewife daily, are sung in the homes of hundreds of men and women, thus creating a musical and cultural climate in every corner of the region. We have a plethora of folk :songs such as Purāṇic songs, marriage songs, agricultural songs, padyams, lāli, nalaṅgu, ūñjal, oḍam and suvvi. Some are sung by women alone, on occasions like birth, nāmakaraṇa, cradling, marriage, ஊசல் (Swing) or தாலாட்டுப் பாட்டுகள் (lullaby) in Nīlāmbari, Ānandabhairavi, Kummi, satirical songs, ammāṇai and kaẓhakkoḍi and ārṭisongs. These are set in rāgas like Navarōj, Kuriñji, Yadukula kāmbhoji and the rūpa of these rāgas which have a folk origin are preserved in these treasures. Through oral tradition, these songs have come to posterity and illiterate women of these centuries were the proud custodians of the precious knowledge. It is to be noted that Tyāgarāja's mother taught him the songs of Bhadrāchala Rāmadāsa and Rāmanāṭakakīrtanas.

The world of Carnātic music should ever be grateful to the devout women (Dēva dāsis) who had dedicated their life and soul for the pursuit of fine arts in the daily service of the Almighty. in the various temples of South India during the last centuries. The institution of Dēva dāsis (servants of the Lord) had a glorious history of being the cradle for nourishing the arts of music and dance. They not only offered worship to the Gods through the highest form, that of Music and dance daily, but themselves being composers of merit, philosophers and great intellectuals, added to the existing repertoire of Carnātic music and literature; further they were great inspirers of good music and preserved the beautiful music born in their precincts. They were the direct custodians of the many beautiful songs (jāvalis, padas, Tillānas and Pada varṇas) which otherwise would have been lost to posterity for ever. The oral tradition and notebooks preserved by these sensitive artists contain many valuable and priceless songs of Carnātic music. Posterity remembers the royal patrons and artists of South India like Mahēndravarman Pallavan and Rājarāja Choḻan. For any art to grow and establish itself with highly evolved and

standard styles, distinct and characteristic techniques of expression, it necessarily requires an unimpeded flow of artistic inspiration, enthusiasm on the part of the ruling and governing forces. The literature and inscriptions are highly eloquent about Rājarāja' munificent patronage. The division of the land into musical and dance regions like *Gita vinodā vaḷanādu, Nitta vinoda vaḷanādu,* the appointment of 400 dancing girls in the Big Temple at Tañjāvūr—the symbol of Coḷa genius, and providing them with lands and houses to live in and the vast endowments to the temples for the perpetual conduct of musical services in the temples bear ample proof of the abundant love of the royal artiste. The rulers of Vijayanagara Kingdom and Tañjāvūr, the Nāyaks and Marāthās, were well known for their patronage of music and dance of their times and also the overwhelming zeal with which they pursued musical learning throughout their lives. This fact has found ample expression in the literature of the period. The rich musical activity in their courts and in the various temples under the royal patronage could be assessed with the help of the references in the contemporary literature. Women court poets and musicians in the court of King Raghunātha Nāyak (1600-1634) were *Rāmabhadrāmba,* the author of *Raghunāthābhyudaya* and *Madhuravāṇi,* both of whom were highly learned and profusely honoured by the king. The former's work throws light on the life and accomplishments of the ruler and alludes to the music in his court. Instances of women dancers honoured with *Kanakābhishēkam* [showering gold] are also available. *Sukhavāṇi* was awarded the title of *Madhuravāṇi* and *Kanakābhishēkam* was performed by Raghunātha Nāyak in appreciation of the sweetness of her literary style and proficiency in vīṇa playing.

The ladies in the court were experts in the four types of poetic compositions—*āśu, chitra. madhura, vistara* and were adepts in playing Vīna and saṅgīta. Gita, ālāpa, tāya and prabandha were easily rendered by them. A number of Yakshagaṇas, Koravañjis, Jakkins, and padas were composed by the kings also for being used in the dance recitals and for enactment of plays in the theatre attached to the palace and, the kings used to witness such performances of music and dance. References to the names of dancers such as *Madana sañjīvini, Mañjuvāṇi, Aparañji Voyyāri*

and others are available. For a dancer to become eligible for Vijayarāghava Nāyaka's appreciation, she must be able to compose padyas, padas and ability to sing them, in addition to her proficiency in rāga ālapa and in the art of dancing. There adorned the court, dancers who specialised in dance styles like Padachali, Pērani, Jakkini, Dhrupada Kēlika, Choupada, Korvai, Navapada, Sabdachintāmaṇi and so on. In the court of Vijayarāghava Nāyak (1633–1673), one *Rangājamma* who composed Yakshagaṇas and padas, received *Kanakābhishēkam* from Vijayarāghava Nāyaka.

The famous court dancer *Muddumanga* during the period of Ekoji (1736–1739) was honoured for each of her performances of the varieties viz. Jakkini, Padachāli, Tuḷḷal and Abhinaya, with a pearl necklace or muktyāla. *Muddupalani,* who flourished in the court of Pratāpasimha Mahārāja (1739–1763) wrote '*Rādhika-sāntwanamu*' a sweet lyric and *Saptapadālu,* which purports to be a translation of Āṇḍāḷ's *Tiruppavai* with a originality all its own. She was honoured in recognition of her excellence. The two dancing girls, *Vanajākshi* and *Muthumannār,* who accompanied Mahādēva Ānnāvi to the Tañjāvūr court, during Tulaja's reign (1763–1787) performed dance to the varṇa '*Bhosala Tulajēndra Rāja*', while Mahādeva naṭṭuvanār did naṭṭuvāngam. As a mark of recognition, ten vēlis of land and a house in West Main Street in Tañjāvūr were gifted to them. One Sundari was a court dancer during the reign of Sarabhoji (1798–1843) on a salary of Rs. 15/–. On every Vijayadaśami day, she was honoured with a present of Rs. 20/– a privilege enjoyed by her and her descendents. These dancers performed in the *Sarabēndra Bhūpāla Kuravañji Nāṭaka,* by Kottaiyūr Sivakkozundu Dēśikar that was enacted annually at the festival in the Big Temple, Tañjāvūr and also in *Manmatha Nāṭaka* written by the Tañjāvūr quartette. Rules were framed governing the equipment, costumes and conduct of court dancer. The Tañjvāūr Quartette systematised the dance programme of the period and themselves composed, varṇas, jatisvara, svarajati, tiḷḷāna and sloka varṇas for the purpose. Music and dance at this period were the essential privileges of the temple dancers, court dancers, naṭṭuvanārs and nāgaswaram players. And the music of the Bharatanāṭya programme was always of high classical excellence.

Bharata nāṭya which was till then confined only to temples, festivities and marriage functions became highly developed as a regular art form, through the perseverance and love of many dedicated artists who flourished during the golden age of Carnātic Music. To mention a few, Tiruvārur Gñānam, Tañjāvūr Kamalamba, Pudukoṭṭai Ammālu, Kamakshamma of Tañjāvūr, Sēlam Mīnākshi, Muthuratnamma, Kalyāṇi daughters and Mylāpore Gowri Ammāḷ of recent hallowed memory. The prestige of the vīna and its music was enhanced by the handling of the instrument by the greatest exponent of the instrument, Smt. Vīna Dhanammāḷ. The story of Dhanammāḷ is also a story of a rich tradition, a history of music and musicians in epic magnitude and grandeur. She represented the best of Carnātic musical tradition and it is rightly said that those who have not heard her, have not heard the best of Carnāṭic music.

She was the repository of a rich stock of compositions of great stalwarts. She was again the only musician who played a large number of Padas, jāvalis, rare and apūrva kritis of great composers. That rāga bhāva and melody are the most essential elements in music is clearly evident in her renderings. The beauty of the pada composition with fuḷl rāga bhāva and couched in vilambita kala is fully revealed when played in Vīna.

The family for generations has been a treasure house of Carnātic tradition. The family tree can be traced back to over 200 years, every branch bristles with music and dance. Pāppammāḷ was a musician and dancer at the Tañjāvūr court (18th century) and so also her daughter Rukmaṇi ammāḷ. Her daughter Kāmākshi (1810–1890) was taught by Gaṇapati Śāstri and danced at the Tañjāvūr court till the age of 75. Kāmākshi ammāḷ's daughter Sundaramma (1830–1888), was a direct disciple of Śyāma Śāstri. It is on record that Subbarāya Sāstri, taught Ponnuswāmy and Sundaramma. The family of Dhanammāḷ and their descendants to-day are thus the finest repository of the compositions of Śyāma Śāstri and Subbarāya Śāstri and also authentic interpreters of their compositions. Sundarammāḷ's daughter, Dhanammāḷ, was the finest

and the most sensitive exponent of the instrument, Carnātic music has ever produced. The Vīna was the most ideal vehicle of expression for her. Music and dance reigned supreme in the household. The family was an inspiration for composers and teachers like Subbarāya Śāstri, Śāttanūr Pañchanada Iyer, Paṭṇam Subramania Iyer, and Dharmapuri Subbarāyar. The Javali "*smarasundāraguni*" a beautiful jewel of a javali, was composed for Vīna Dhanammāḷ by Subbarayār. Each of Dhanammāḷ's daughters, Lakshmiratnamma, Rājalakshmi, Jayammāḷ and Kāmākshi (all vocalists) had the stamp of the brilliant musical tradition of Dhanammāḷ in them.

It was an age when ladies had specialised in mastering a number of compositions and naturally they capitalised on it. Some of the famous vocalists of the last century whose line is fortunately being kept up, may be mentioned. The recordings of some of their music are also available.

(1) Kāñchīpuram Dhanakoṭiammāḷ and her sister Kāmākshiammāḷ, who was the mother of Nāyana Piḷḷai—the famous exponent in the field of laya and pallavi.

(2) Coimbatore Tāyi ammāḷ.

(3) Tiruchēndur Shaṇmugavaḍivu—expert singer of Tamiḻ songs and Tēvāram.

(4) Vīnai Madurai S. Shaṇmugavaḍivu, mother of M. S. Subbulakshmi.

(5) Tiruviḍaimarudur Bhavāni who could sing the rare tillāna of Kunrakkuḍi Krishna Iyer. Sēlam Godāvari, was a singer of number of Jāvalis.

(6) Enadi sisters—vocalists.

(7) Sēlam Mīnākshi—disciple of Paṭṇam Subramaṇia Iyer.

Accompaniments by women came later. From the days of Smt. Saraswathi Bāi, the first professional lady Harikatha performer professional musicians took to playing flute, nāgaswaram, Tavil and mridaṅgam. Dhanakōtiammā's mother, Viśalākshiammāḷ was

a violinist and Vālādy Rukmaṇi played on the flute. Madurai Ponnuthāyi was a nāgaswaram and Tavil player. Baṅgalore Nāgaratnammāḷ, was a great bhakta, scholar and musician, who had to her credit, books and many titles such as '*Tyāga sēvā sākta*', '*Gāna kalā viśārada*' and '*Vidyāsundari*', built the temple to Saint Tyāgarāja at Tiruvayyār and did Kumbābhishēka in 1925.

Among dancers the following names may be mentioned:

(a) Tiruvārur Rājāyee—*Kanakābhishēkam* was performed on her by the Rājā of Rāmanāthapuram. She was also a vocalist.

(b) Pudukkoṭṭai Ammālu Ammāḷ.

(c) Tañjavur Kāmākshi.

(d) Tiruvaḷaputhur Kalyāṇi.

(e) Kāmākshi Ammāḷ, Mylāpore Gouri Ammāḷ who inspired Ramgopāl, Rukmini Dēvi and Bālasaraśwathi.

Instances of women being honoured by the Government are very recent. Smt. Bālasaraśwathi and Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi were awarded the Doctorate Degree by Rabhīndra Bhārati. K. B. Sundarāmbaḷ was the first to receive the தமிழக அரசு விருது (State award of Tamiḻ Nāḍu Government). The Presidential awards were conferred on M. S. Subbulakshmi, Rukmiṇi Arundāle, Bālasaraśwati, Kamalā, Swarṇasundari, Brindā, Muktā, Pattammāl and on many other notable artists.

Rise of women composers is a bright feature of contemporary music and publications of their songs are available.

The spread of Music has naturally paved the way for the influx of women from their homes to study music and dancing, to take up careers and institutional trainings. The gradual impact of modernization was felt in the field of music and other cultural spheres also. Women took up music, as a career, became performing artists, research workers, led cultural delegations to other countries spreading the radiance of our musical culture besides making their own tiny homes, the temples of Music.

TMT. KRISHNA SANJEEVI, M.A., B.T.; *Professor of Tamil, Queen Mary's College* next read her paper on—

WOMEN IN THE WORKS OF BHĀRATHI AND BHĀRATHIDĀSAN

It is but proper that we give a special thought to the 'women' in the works of Bhārathi and Bhārathidāsan in keeping with the spirit of the International Women's year which lays a great stress on the Women's Liberation Movement. This would help us to ponder over the condition of women of their time. A deep study of their poems reveals the ideals for which they strove.

The age in which Bhārathi lived was one when our Motherland was under the British thraldom—a time when there was no freedom of speech. But Bhārathidāsan witnessed the end of imperialism as well as the dawn of freedom. Yet there was no release for the people from the custom-ridden society. Amidst that gloomy atmosphere, Bhārathi, who was deeply religious and patriotic, wrote about reform to be brought about in society based on his religious beliefs. On the contrary, Bhārathidāsan, an atheist and a follower of Dravida principle, sang about the social reforms based on commonsense and atheistic principles. In spite of their differences, the theist and social reformer Bhārathi and the atheist and social reformer Bhārathidāsan, strove with untiring zeal to write about the emancipation of women.

Bhārathi glorified women as deity, mother, wife, daughter and an 'ideal' girl (Puthumaippeṇ) while Bhārathidāsan deals only with the last four aspects of a woman. There are two things which Bhārtahidāsan dealt with and which Bhārathi did not (one is widowhood and remarriage and, the other Birth control).

As a mother:

Bhārathi believed that political awakening should root out all social evils from a country. Bhārathidāsan's views were different. He believed that unless Indian womankind awakens from its past slumber and is no longer the slave of man, there can be no real

freedom of a country.[1] The nation expects her to bring up her children as honest, healthy, and patriotic citizens. But a woman who is bound by the customs of society will bear effeminate children like the tortoise which concises the five senses.[2]

If a man were to be intelligent and manly and if he were to win plaudit from the whole world and defend the home and nation against those who would destroy them then he needs an emancipated and educated mother—she who enjoys the same rights as man.[3] It is but natural that a child is bound to go astray otherwise.

As a wife :

The mere look of woman arouses the chivalry of man. The two poets Bhārathi and Bhārathidāsan have no difference of opinion on this point.[4]

Parents usually oppose their son marrying a girl of his choice. But in 'Kuḍumba Viḷakku', Bhārathidāsan has shown the unusual case of parents not only consenting but going out of the way to promote the happiness of a boy who wishes to marry the girl of his choice. Both Maṇavazhagan and Thaṅgam agree to their son Vēdappan marrying Muthunagai. They are prepared to overcome all obstacles and readily offer the girl's family wealth if required They are willing to set aside family feuds. Enmity should be no bar to their son's happiness. The father does not mind humiliating himself if this can patch up their differences. Usually in the world, the feuds caused by love deepen, but here the poet shows that there can be a cementing force resulting in happiness.[5]

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1. *Bhārathidāsan Kavithaikal* I, p. 3.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.* I, p. 105.
   Bhārthiār Kavithaikal, pp. 260–61.
   Ibid. p. 261, Stanza 7 (3–4), 8 (3–4) and 9.
4. *Ibid.* p 337, Stanza 49.
   Ibid. p. 274, Stanza 4.
   Bhārathidāsan Kavithaikal I, p. 4.
5. Kndumbavilakku, pp. 110–11.

Bhārathiār sings of the welfare of the individual. In society if there is a man who starves because of poverty, then it is better to destroy this world. But the poet does not specify if there was any self-respect and standard for the individual or general code for the society. 'Pāñchāli Sabadam'[6] is an example that depicts the worst conditions of the society.

Bhārathidāsan pleads for equal rights for man and woman. By law, by enforcing punishment, woman can claim equal rights. Woman should enjoy as much freedom as a man does. In 'Peṇ Viduthalai' he narrates the story of the girl who could not bear the ill-treatment of her parents-in-law and husband and when the situation becomes unbearable she thinks of committing suicide. But unexpectedly a government servant, the police, came there and warned the people announcing that the wife must be given equal rights for the property and the man must marry a second wife only on the death of the first wife and if he does any harm to the wife it will be considered as a crime.[7]

Poet Bhārathi also extols the right of women. The girl should enjoy freedom, have right of speech and should sharpen her intelligence by experience. In Pāñchāli Sabadham, the poet makes Pāñchāli to show her tact and shrewdness.[8] Undaunted by the presence of elders she defies Duriyodhana. Thus the poet makes us to realise that woman must have liberty to defend herself.

Bhārathidāsan is of the opinion that it is not enough if women possess the gifts of oratory. They must also have a strong sense of bravery. In the drama which is highly poetic (*Ezhuchi Peṟṟa Peṇ*) the girl is prepared to defend the honour by chasing the unscrupulous man from her presence. Armed with a sword in one hand, with the other she shows him the way out. The incident may sound humorous but the poet stresses the fact that a woman should have strength of mind to defend herself against

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6. Pāñchāli Sabadham, pp. 543-44.
7. Bhārathidāsan's *Panmaṇittiraṭṭu*, p. 138.
8. Pāñchāli Sabadham, pp. 535, 542, 544.

the evils of society. If necessary she should defend herself with a sword.[9]

There are men who follow a certain code of life but are selfish enough to prescribe a different set of rules for women. There can be no advancement in society if women are treated as slaves. Bhārathiār expects men to show the same restraint as women do. It is not enough if women alone are chaste. Men should also have purity of thought. If the fence itself is destroying the stalks of grain then how can it be safe?[10]

The poet feels that the tender minds can be trained well and lofty ideals can be instilled into them. It is easier to train them than the grown up ones. The young minds if well disciplined can reform society. Revolutionary poets pin their faith on tender minds. In his songs, Bhārathi reveals certain truths. His song 'Pāppā Pāṭṭu' 'Koṭṭu Murasu'[11] underline deep values of life. Bhārathidāsan also refers to the same theme in his lullaby songs.[12]

In *Ātthichūḍi*—he refers to certain qualities in man which if followed will establish an ideal world.

1. Be Brave, 2. Control the senses, 3. Oppose the infliction of cruelty, 4. Never shrink from death, 5. Never be weak-willed when threatened by troubles, 6. Do fight evil, 7. Be well-versed in law, 8. Be frank and honest, 9. Guard one's honour, 10. Always be prepared to face battle, 11. Lay down certain principles of good life.

The poet does not believe in caste distinctions. A man is distinguished not by birth, into some community, but by his behaviour. He belongs to a high caste if he is well read, has

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9. *Bhārathidāsan Kavithaikal* I, p. 112.
10. *Bhārathiār Kavithaikal*, p. 262, Stanza 5, p. 339. Stanza 55, 56.
11. *Ibid.* pp. 249, 252.
12. *Bhārathidāsan Kavithaikal* I, p. 127.

good principles; caste differences destroy peace in the world[5] Society can be well knit by love-love of one's neighbours.[13]

In Bhārathidāsan's lullaby[14] song he emphasizes the freedom enjoyed by girls, their rights, their education and their devotion to duty. A nation that respects its women will hold an unique place in the world. Every nation should be proud of her women.

The ideal woman, Bhārathiār considers is she who walks erect and straight as the ideal woman. Good behaviour, courage, intelligence, determination or firmness of purpose, a pleasant nature a good stock of knowledge, love and ability to discuss—all these qualities will help in creating respect and dignity in a woman. Bhārathidāsan's ideal woman shows her nobility in her actions.[1].

Widowhood:

There were many hindrances for the natural blooming of woman. At every stage her position in life is not secure. A widow, for example, receives miserable treatment in the hands of her people and society. Bhārathidāsan wished to save woman from this wretchedness. There should be a reform in society whereby the widow will enjoy a certain degree of freedom. The very word widow should be removed from the 'dictionary' so that the widow will not bow down under humiliating rules of society.[16]

Birth Contorl:

Bhārathidāsan advocated birth control even in those days. A limited healthy family will be an asset to society. It is better to have a small family and be in a position to look after them well, bring them up as an asset to society rather than multiply the family unconcernedly. It is not the quantity that matters

13. *Bhārathi Kavithaikal*, pp. 257, 253.
    Bhārathidāsan Kavithaikal I, p. 125.
    Paṇḍian Parisu Kāthal Eyaṛkai.
14. *Ibid.* I, p. 127.
15. *Bhārathiar Kavithaikal* p. 257.
16. *Bhārathidāsan Kavithaikal* I, pp. 118, 120, 121.

but quality.[17] Without establishing an International Women's Year both Bhārathiār and Bhārathidāsan have given great thought to womanhood. Ruskin has compared women to lilies of garden (Seasame and Lilies). These two poets too have held women as of high position. An ideal woman according to them should first of all safeguard her chastity. Both men and women should possess a pure heart, work with a good conscience. It is said that if you educate a man you educate an individual but if you educate a woman you educate a family. This points out the intelligence and responsibility that a woman should shoulder. The children, the future citizens of its country is under her care. A woman with a good education and chastity requires no medicines as she will maintain both a good physique and mental balance. No old age problems or diseases will affect them. A society that respects women will flourish. Stable intelligent women will prevent warfare and establish a good social order.

It is the bounden duty of men to safeguard the interest of woman. Certain restraints held by society especially with regard to widowhood have to be removed but society need not accept the liberation that American women are agitating for. Liberation movement has resulted in the pendulum swinging to the other extreme, demanding equality of sexes, unisex dresses, and night clubs. India with its rich traditions based on spiritual heritage will reflect well before accepting these new trends of western civilization.

It is only women who can build up a happy society. If there are defects in society they can set it right. It is not enough if she has academic distinctions or a grand status in life. She must be admired and respected by the society. She must be well spoken of. She should realise her limitations and act with dignity and decorum. Under these circumstances she is sure to enjoy freedom. Such a woman will surely understand the true meaning of the word 'freedom'. With such women to guide the society, the men will naturally take their place in society worthy of their status.

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17. *Bhārathidāsan Kavithaigal* I, p. 124.

SMT. S. A. DURGA, M.A., M.Litt., *Lecturer, Department of Music, University of Madras* next read her paper on—

TRADITIONAL IDEAS IN THE LIFE OF MODERN WOMEN

Traditional ideas are the principles, customs and beliefs which were followed from very early times. It can be described as the 'Social Heritage'. It determines certain behavioural patterns and is based on the principle of continuity as it transmits the achievements of the past to the future. These traditional ideas are passed from generation to generation mainly through the help of women. When women lose faith in the traditional ideas due to alien influences, a threat is presented to the very survival of traditional values.

In this paper, the term 'Modern Women' does not includ all the women who are living in the present age. But it is used to denote a section of women who accept changes and this group of women are generally educated and belong to the either upper or middle class family. Among the modern women, there are two types, one who are traditionally-oriented and the other Western oriented. In South India, the traditionally-oriented modern women outnumber the other type of women. But the traditional ideas are still preserved by modern women though changes are introduced in the method of carrying out the traditional practices and customs.

There is a common notion that modern women do not respect the traditional ideas and especially that the women of higher strata of society are breaking the traditional values. But a study of them reveals that traditional ideas are still preserved by modern women though they are well educated and, belong to either to the rich or the middle class. They accept the changes to carry out the traditional ideas.

Modern women are facing today the problem of Tradition *vs* Modernity. They are trying to strike a balance by adher-

ing the traditional practices into which changes are introduced within the framework of tradition. Change is unavoidable in a dynamic society to suit the period and environment. There cannot be stability, no doubt, without tradition but without change there cannot be progress. The tradition must be enriched not by stagnating where we are but by reinterpreting tradition on the one hand and by giving new dimension on the other. This is what is done by the modern women with regard to traditional ideas and practices.

The traditional practices are bound up with domestic and social lives which are still maintained by modern women. Domestic life is concerned with household activities. The cleaning of the entrance of the house and decorating it with *Kolam* or Art Design in the morning and evening is a traditional custom in South India. Traditionally the cleaning was done with the sprinkling of water mixed with cow dung and the *Kolam* was drawn with the flour of the raw rice. This was done by the lady of the household. Now the basic idea of decorating the entrance in the morning and evening is still retained but a change has been introduced in carrying out this practice with the modern facilities. At present, mere water is used to clean the entrance because, in cities cow-dung is not freely available and is used mostly for the purpose of fuel. The *Kolam* is now drawn with *Chunnam* (lime) powder or colour powders because the heavy increase in the price of the raw rice does not permit one to use its flour for decorative purposes. Also the *Chunnam* powder and colour powders are brighter than the flour of the raw rice. Today the servant maid does the work because, the busy life of a modern women does not permit her to spend her time leisurely for putting Art Designs.

Coming to the kitchen, modern women carry out the cooking job with all modern appliances. Nowadays the kitchen looks more beautiful than any other place in the house. The kitchen platform is put in marble tiles, the walls are fixed with Johnson's tiles and the flooring is done with Kent tiles or mosaic tiles in a modern home. The traditional cooking ovens and vessels have

changed. The ovens for which coal and logs were used for fuel were replaced by kerosene stoves, Gas stoves and Electric hot-plates. The ash and soot which were emitted by the old ovens are averted by the modern ovens. The brass and aluminium wares are replaced by stainless steel vessels and ceramic wares. Electrically operated grinders and mixers are used now by the housewife to save the time. Totally, all these modern kitchen appliances give a very neat and beautiful look to the kitchen. The cleaning of the kitchen naturally has been changed by using Dettol or any other antiseptic solution instead of the age old method of cleaning the place with water mixed with cowdung.

Regarding the traditional beliefs, modern women are still religious minded and God fearing. Atheism has not yet spread among women. They believe in God and Śāstras. Modern women go to the temples and worship God on festival days. A portrait or an image of God or Goddess is kept in every house though there may not be a *pooja* room in many houses. Every woman offers flowers to the God which is kept in her house and lights a *Kuthuvilakku*, a type of standing oil lamp. Modern women today observe all the religious festivals. On these festival days, the *Kolam* is drawn with the paste of the raw rice and *Chemman* or *Kāvi* which is red gravel powder which is used to decorate the *Kolam*. This decoration is made inside and outside the house. In those houses wherein the mosaic tiles or marble stones are used for flooring, the crayon colour pencils are used for putting *Kolam* and red cement powder, as red oxide, is used instead of *Kāvi* or *Chemman*, as *Kolam* with rice paste and *Kāvi* are invisible in both marble and mosaic flooring. On festival days, the traditional custom of hanging the mango leaves at the entrance door is still practised. The traditional custom of preparing special dishes for every religious festival is also unchanged and is not replaced by cakes, puddings or ice-creams. The traditional idea of lighting the lamp at the verandah or sit-out in the evening is followed by modern women todate, to signify the traditional idea that she greets and invites Goddess Lakshmi to her house. Instead of lighting an oil lamp made of clay which is known as *Akal Vilakku* in Tamil,

the electric light is switched on at the entrance or in the verandah or sit-out in the evening.

Modern women are still tradition-bound and, they want the marriage to be performed in the traditional style. They wear the '*Thali*' according to their caste and community. The *Thali* was traditionally worn in the yellow thread which was tied by the husband but now it is worn in gold chain. The traditional idea of wearing the *Thali* is still followed by modern women. The traditional idea that the *Thali* should not be worn by a widow is also followed. Traditionally, the use of turmeric powder, *Kumkum* on the forehead, glass bangles on the hands and, wearing of flowers on the head are prohibited for widows and we find this practice is still prevalent even among modern women.

Regarding the dress and make-up of modern women, we find that the traditional idea of wearing the saree is common even today. The new 'Chic' patterns, Bell-bottoms, Maxis etc. are worn by modern girls and not by modern women. It is well known that the highest fashion in sarees today, are those that are woven in the traditional designs. Traditionally, married women used to wear the saree according to their caste which has been changed now and, modern women follow only one style of wearing the Saree whether married or not and to whichever community they belong. No doubt, this is a welcome change made within the framework of tradition by modern women. Decoration with cosmetics is a traditional practice among women. The cosmetics such as turmeric powder, *kumkum*, *Bindi*, collyrium, *pan-Supari*, and the paste from '*Mehandi*' leaves were used formerly. Modern women use cosmetics which suit with the present day conditions. The old cosmetics are now replaced by Foundations, Face powders, Talcum Powders, Eye liners, Eye shadows, Lipstick, Nail Polish and other things. These are more preferreb dy modern women than the cosmetics of those days as modern cosmetics have their own advantages to suit the present day.

Modern women believes in the traditional idea that they should be loving mothers to their children and affectionate wives to their

husbands. Todate, modern women feel that it is their duty to bring up their children as good citizens and hence they spend their time in training their children. They also believe that they must attend to the needs of their husbands which is a traditional idea. Housewives are entrusted mainly with these two duties apart from home management. But today modern women apart from attending on children and husband and managing the home, earn for their family by taking up their own career or do social work for the community.

India has seen galloping inflation in recent years and henee it has become impossible to maintain the home with the incomc of one member of the household. With the advancement of science and technology, innumerable facilities are available and hence the needs have also become greater today than in the olden days. A modern woman contribute her share to her family by taking up a career of her own. This income from women enhances the purchasing power for the families and provides for greater comforts though possibly at a greater cost. The traditional idea is not that the place of women is "*The Home*" but "*For the Home*". This tradition is still kept up by modern women.

To take up a career, modern women get educated. One cannot say that women were uneducated previously but education for women in those days is different from the education of today. Even during the Vēdic period, women composed hymns and chanted at the Vēdic sacrifices. In the fifth chapter of the Rig Vēda, the invocation hymn addressed to Ashwins—the twin Gods—the forerunners of dawn—was composed by a woman Viswavara. Ghosha is another woman who composed Rig Vēdic hymns. Another famous composer is Lopāmudra, wife of Agasthya, the sage. Coming down to the Purāṇic period, Gārgi, Maithrēyi, Tāra and Sulabha were great women philosophers, Gārgi remained unmarried and dedicated her life for knowledge. Historically, Mandanamiśra's wife Bhārati was a famous scholar, who argued with Ādi Saṅkara and won in the argument. Lilāvathi, th edaughter of Bhāskarāchāri a who although a widow was not consigned to the gloomy corner of the house but was a great authority on mathematics and philosophy. During

fourteenth century, Lakshmi Dēvi wrote a law book named Vividchandra. We hear a number of women scholars in music, dance and poetry throughout our historical period. From the time of the British rule, women started studying in Institutions and modern women are generally educated as most of them want to take up a career of their own.

Women participated in social activities even in olden days. The interference of Avvaiyār in the political policy of king Adhiyamān is greatly acclaimed. Maṇimēkalai, took part in the propagation of Buddhistic religion. The queens of Chēra, Çoḷa and Pāṇḍya took interest in the political affairs of their kingdom. They took active interest in religious activities also. The participation of modern women in social activities is not against the traditional practice. Of course, the number of women participants in social activities have increased today.

As modern women move with men more freely as they are working in the offices, study in co-educational institutions and take part in social activities, inter-caste marriages have increased. But in India, inter-caste marriages were in vogue even before the Brahmanical period. That the woman had the right to choose her own husband is evident from the mention of 'Swayamvara' and 'Gāndarva Vivāha' in our literature. Widow remarriage and Divorce were also permitted in India. Naradīya Dharma Śāstra by Nārada says in Chapter XII, 103 and 97 that widow remarriages are not unknown and under certain circumstances the wife was allowed to re-marry even during the life time of the husband. This work is earlier than the Law of Manu. Hence widow remarriage and divorce among a few modern women are also acts which were permitted by our Śāstras.

Finally, it can be said that modern women value the traditional ideas, and follow the traditional practices and customs though the method of carrying out the traditional customs have changed because of the social, economical, political and cultural influences. Our hoary Indian tradition will always be preserved by women. The concept of the International Women's Year is the year of

the whole race, as it requires concentrated effort to help women to build a more rewarding life for themselves and more useful life for the community for which men and women should both work together.

THIRU S. SHUNMUGA SUNDARAM, M.A., *Tamil Department, University of Madras*, next read his paper on the

IMAGE OF WOMEN IN TAMIL FOLKLORE

Introduction:

Women are the fly wheel of the society. They have continued to sacrifice their interest for the development of the society. In Tamiḻ, '*āvathum pennāḷē aḻivathum pennāḷē*' is a proverb. So the development and destruction of the human society are in the hands of women. A woman carries different status in her life such as a child, as a wife, as a labourer and as a member of the family. Man called his country, river, moon, sea and the earth only in the feminine gender.

Tamiḻ folklore remains as a treasure of Tamiḻ culture and as a symbol of Tamiḻ tradition. folk songs, folk tales, folk dances, ballads, proverbs, folk beliefs are the various divisions of folklore. In folklore, women laugh in happiness, mourn in sufferings, oppose terrorism. In this paper an attempt has been made to describe the image of women in Tamiḻ folklore.

Women in Tamiḻ: Folksongs:

Folksongs are neither the products of one man nor of one generation nor or one particular section of a society. They are composed, improved, modified and passed on from one generation to another. Folksongs reflect the human life in all its aspects and all colours, both light and shade. Lullaby, nursery rhymes, labour-songs, and love songs, give the complete picture of women. Women have played a greater role in the evolution of folksongs than men. They are very plain, simple and sentimental. They sing in joy and in sorrow.

Young girls are like the flowers of the human society. Playing and joking are like their two eyes. Even though they are living

on earth their dreams are heavenly. Singing, dancing and laughing are the main characteristics of the girls.

Kaḷarchi, Kallaṅgai, Añjukal, Ammānai are the names of games which are played by the young girls in villages. Whenever they play these games they sing counting from one to ten. Pallaṅkuḷi, Thāyam and Banthu are the games played by the girls without any songs. But Kaṇṇāmūchi, Kiliyanthaṭṭu and Ūñjal are played with songs.

'Kaṇṇāmūchi Ḍe Ḍe
Kāṭṭumūchi Ḍe Ḍe'[1]

This song is sung in the 'Kaṇṇāmūchi' game. In the nursery rhymes we cannot find perfect meaning or subject matter. Expressing joy and happiness is the main feature of these rhymes.

Some gay songs are sung by the small girls. In these songs, they make fun of their grand fathers grand mothers, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. They cut jokes ridiculing their appearance happiness lying under the jokes.

"Poo Poo Puḷiyām Poo
Poṉṉattāṉ Koṇḍaikku Tāḷam Poo"[2]

In this song the girls make fun of their cousins saying that only tamarind flowers would be very fitting to their buns.

In this cheerful age, the girls sing Kummi, Kōlāṭṭam and 'maaraḍi' songs with dances. These are held in the occasions of marriages, festivals of goddesses and the ceremonies for rain. During the Poṅgal festival, girls sing the Kummi and Kōlāṭṭam songs, on the banks of the river and lakes. These dances are considered as a ritual ceremony.

" Inta nilavu Pativirukka
Santāṉa Maari Koluvirukka

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1. *Tamiḻ Nāṭṭup Pāmarar Paaḍalgaḷ* (T.N.P.P.)—N. Vanamamalai 1960.

2. *Kulandai Ulagam* (I.V.)—K. V. Jaganathan 1967).

Inta Nilavukkum Santāṇa Mārikkum
Ilaṅgavē Kummi thulaṅgavē"[3]

(There is moon in the sky. Santhāna Maari, goddess is in the Temple. They sing the Kummi for the favour of moon and the Maari) I heard the song which was sung by the Scheduled caste girls at a festival.

'Maaraḍi' is a kind of dance with songs which is performed by the girls during the death of very aged people. While dancing they beat their own chests with their hands, ryhthmically.

"Kattarikkā eṅgaḷukku Kailāsam Uṅgaḷukku
Pūsaṇikkā eṅgaḷukku Pūlōkam Uṅgaḷakku"[4]

(The brinjal is for us and Kailāsam (heaven) is for yourself. Pumpkin is for us and Pūlogam for you). From this song we can infer that people have belief in Kailāsam and Pūlogam.

When there is no rain, the girls of the villages gather and sing songs praying for rain with Kummi dance. They consider themselves as beggars and beg at every house by singing.

The grown-up girls in the village go to the fields to work before and after their marriages. They work in the agricultural fields, in the forests to cut firewood, in the mills to weave, in the estates to collect tea leaves etc. Even though they work hard equally with men, they do not get the equal pay. The supervisors of their fields give them much trouble.

One among them is husking 'Varaku' rice in a mortar. Another is going to collect fire wood in the forests. A third is carrying food for her husband. A dhoby woman is washing clothes on the banks of a river. But we can identify various types of working women by their Tamil folk songs. A woman sings:

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3 & 4. Collected by me.

"Simbi Simbi Iyā eḍuthu ulakkai
Siṟṟelumbai nōvutaiyā"[5]

(Our bones are aching because of husking.)

Another woman suffers from hard work.

"Taṇṇi Karuttiruççu, Tavaḷai Çattam Kēṭṭuruççu
Piḷḷai aḷutiruççu Puṇṇiyārē Vēlai Viṭu"[6]

(The water looks black, because of dusk. The croaking sounds of frogs is heard. My child is crying my Boss! Please let me go.)

A woman describes the brutality of the supervisors in the fields as:

"Kāḍuṇum Illai Mēḍuṇum Illai
Vīḍūṇṇum Illaiammā
Kaṇḍa Iḍamellām Kaṇḍa Kaṇḍa Peṇkaḷai
Kaiyāl Piḍittu Iḻuppār"[7]

(Whether it is forest or rock or house they pull our hands at any places.)

Transplantation of seedlings, harvesting, carrying the hay bundles etc. are agricultural works. A woman who has obtained a job in agricultural operations in dry lands finds it difficult work in the wet lands, after her marriage because she is not accustomed to the same.

"Nāṭṭu naṭṭu nān aṟiyēṉ
Naṭuvai naṭṭu nān aṟiyēṉ
Cettukkuḷḷē niṉṉukiṭṭē
Çella magaḷ Vāḍu rēṉe"[8]

(I don't know how to transplant and how to weed out. I feel helpless in this slushy mud).

5. *Malai Aruvi* (M. A.)—K. V. Jagannathan—1959.

6. *Tamiḻar Naattup Paadalgal*—K. V. Jagannathan—1964.

7. *Malai Aruvi*—K. V. Jagannathan—1959.

8. *Tamiḻ Nāṭṭu Pāḍalgaḷ*—N. Vanamāmalai—1964.

When women work in the fields, they want to forget their weariness and pain. So they sing some songs. These songs picturise their feelings.

Love songs describe the acts of meeting, separation, waiting and suffering of the lovers, Tamiḻ love songs are called 'Themmāṅgu'.

One-woman is afraid of her name being spoiled by her lover. She sings:

"Ūḍu Teruvilē, Ollisamā Pōra sāmy
Pārkaḍē eṉ mukattai paḻivantu Çērntiḍumē"[9]

(O my sāmy! You are going on the narrow street. Don't see my face, because I am afraid of blame.)

A woman is waiting for her lover. She sings:

"Iḍai Siruthu maarpaḍarnthu ēḻu varuṣam Ku
Seemaiyāḷum Sellasāmy! Siṟai eḍukka varuvatheppo"?[10]

(My hip has become thin and my breasts have become broad. I am waiting for seven years as a virgin. O foreign-returned Sellasamy! Please come to elope with me.)

A woman indicates the place to meet her lover.

"Vēli aḻiñjutuṇṇu Virakeḍukka naṉ Pōrēṉ
Kāḷāṅ Kaṇṇu tappicciṇṇu karai vaḻiyē nīṅga vāṅga"[11]

(I will come pretending to collect the wood to repair the destroyed fence and you must come pretending to find out your calf that has strayed.)

A woman is ready to elope with her lover. So she sings:

"Pālum Vēṇḍām Paḻamum Vēṇḍām
Palaṉi Çambā nellum Vēṇḍām
Yēḻerumai Tayirum Vēṇḍām
Yettai viḍu kappalile"[12]

(I don't want milk, fruits, paḻani çamba rice and even seven buffaloes and curd. Please leave me with my lover on ship.)

9 to 12. *Tamiḻ Naṭṭu Pāḍalgaḷ*—N. Vanamāmalai—1964.

A woman curses her lover because of her failure in love:

"Kaṭṭa paya kuṭṭa paya kāṭṭamaṉṉu tāṇṭi paya
Visuvāsam kēṭṭapaya viṭṭānē ottai vaḻi"[13]

(He is very short and small. He is a wall jumping rascal. He has no loyalty. He has deserted me.)

Thus we come across various kinds of lovers in the Tamiḻ folk songs.

After their marriages, women express opinions about; their husbands, mothers and fathers-in-law through songs. One woman is suffering because of her lazy husband.

" Ācaikku mayir vaḷarttu–māmā
Aḻakukkoru koṇḍai pōṭṭu
Ṣompēṟi Payalukku nāṉ-māmā
Sōrākka āḷānēn".[14]

(I grew my hair with passion and made beautiful bun. But now I have become a wife of a lazy fellow to cook his food.)

A woman is crying because of the cruelty of her husband.

"Aṟiyāta ūrilēyum–nāṉ–Teriyāmal Vāḻkkaippaṭṭēṉ
Aṭiyātaiyā Piṭiyātaiya–nan–Viṭiyakālam ōḍippōrēṉ."[15]

(I have became your wife in an unknown village. Don't beat and quarrel with me. I will run away before the dawn.)

Another young woman hates her husband who is very old.

"Coḷaccōṟu Tiṉṉa māṭṭēṉ, Soṉṉa Collai kēṭka māṭṭēṉ
Naraçça kiḻavaṅkiṭṭē nāṉ Iruntu vāḻa māṭṭēṉ"[16]

(I cannot eat. 1 cannot obey his order. I can not live with the oldman with grey hair.)

A woman feels sad for her under-aged husband.

"Īkku mutti iḍai Ciṟuttu, ēḻu varuṣam Kumariruntēṉ
Pākku mutti paruvam tappi, pālanukko kai koṭuttēṉ"[17]

13. *Ibid.*—1964.

14 to 17. *Tamiḻ Nāṭṭu Pāmarar Pāḍalgaḷ*—N. Vanamāmalai—1960.

(After my maturity I lived in my house for seven years with thin hips and bound breasts. But now I have been compelled to marry a boy.)

One woman curses her husband who married another girl.

"Eṉṉaiyē viṭṭuṭṭu iḷaya tāram kaṭṭinīyē
Pōra vaḷiyilē uṉṉa Pūnāgam tiṇṭātō"[18]

(You left me and married another woman. Won't a snake bite you on the way). Even when Kōvalan lived with Mādavi, Kaṇṇaki kept silent and helped him. But a rustic woman is not able to bear the above act of her husband.

A woman wants the death of her co-wife and sings.

"Cakkāḷatti Cākāḷō Cāmampōla Vēkāḷō
Kōṭṭūru Cantaiyilē koṭṭu Catham kēṭkāṭō"[19]

(My not my co-wife die and I hear the sound of the drum when may when she is put in the fire.)

One woman becomes angry with her husband and comes to the conclusion that she should divorce him. She sings:

"Kuttuṉa arici uṛalilē koḷicca arici morattilē
Ākkiṉa Cōttukku uṇṇāmmā Coṉṉa Intāḍā māmā
ūṇ 'tāli'"[20]

(I don't want to live with you since you only want to find fault with my cooking. I cast the rice before you. Take out your 'thali').

A woman scolds her mother-in-law.

"Pūmiyum nalla pūmi, Puṇṇiyarum nallavartām
Puṇṇiyarai Peṟṟeduttu Peruṅkuraṅkē toṇtaravu"[21]

(The land as well as my husband are good. But the mother-in-law gives me monkey-troubles.)

Another woman warned her paramour who was waiting outside her house when her husband was sleeping thus.

"Pālum aṭuppilē pālakanum toṭṭililē
Pālakaṉai Peṟṟetutta Pāndi maṉṉar Kaṭṭililē"[22]

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18 to 22. *Tamiḻ Nāṭṭu Pāmarar Pāḍalgaḷ*—N. Vanamāmalai—1960.

(Milk is on the even. The baby is in the cradle. Pandimannar who is the father of child, is lying on the cot.)

Thus the married women express their sufferings and sorrows, pleasures and pains through such folksongs.

Lullaby is a song sung when the baby is cradled. Every mother deserves due reverence. The boy-baby is praised in a thousand lullabies. His future glory is foretold. If it is a girl-baby the lullaby muse turns dumb. The baby is advised elaborately in the lullabies. In the lullaby the mother asks the child the reason for its crying. Then she indulges in describing the glory of her family with flowery epithets—

An aristocratic woman sings:

"Māmpaḷ attai kīri vayalukku urampōṭṭu
Tēṉ pāyntu nel viḷayum çelvamuḷḷār pūttiraṉō "[23]

Are you the son of the wealthy land lord, whose lands are fertilised with mangoes and irrigated with honey?)

A poor woman sing a lullaby as follows:

"Ēḷai kuṭicaiyilē īrattarai mēlē
Tāḷam pāi pōṭṭu tavaḷntōṭa' vantāyō
Tarai ellām mēḍu paḷḷam tavaḷntāl uruttātō "[24]

(Have you born in this poor hut to crawl on this damp floor? The floor is rough and uneven. Will it not hurt you when crawling?)

The above songs of two mothers show the difference that existed between their material comforts.

Conceiving a child may not be happy to some poor people. Still it is considered as a gift, because the barrenness is viewed a a curse. A barren woman cries thinking of her fate and prays for a child.

A mother not only sings lullaby but also sings other songs for the happiness of her child as well as herself. By these songs

23 & 24. *Tamiḻ Nāṭṭu Pāḍalgaḷ*—N. Vanamāmalai—1964.

the crying children go gay, tired children become cheerful, and are lured to eat. She sings, Kaiveesu, Cainthāḍu, Taṭanki etc.

One mother sings a song while feeding her child.

"Nilā Nila ōḍiva Nillāmal ōḍivā"[25]

(O moon! come fast! don't stop.)

She is showing the moon to the child because children are fascinated by the moon. A mother at the same time, does two things one is feeding, another is teaching.

The wedding songs reveal the customs of marriage, habits, gifts and the relationships of the people. In these songs, there is enough information about the palmist, goldsmith, carpenter etc. These songs are sung by the married women. People take them as goddesses and believe that their blessings come true. One woman greets a couple as follows:

"Āl pōl taḻaittu Arugu pōl vērōḍi
Mūṅkil pōl çūṟṟam muciyamal vāḻa vēṇḍum"[26]

(The couples are to be enriched like the Banian tree rooted like grass 'Arugu' and to live like Bamboo.)

In an another wedding song, the gifts given by the bride's parents are described. Ridiculing the bride and bridegroom is a part of the wedding songs. The brother-in-law and sister-in-law ridicule the couples through the songs. They do not take them to heart as they are only for fun.

Laments are expressed in melancholic and melodious songs. These are sung by women only, when even they happen to lose their husband or childern or parents or grand parents etc. Thees songs reflect their affection towards the dead relatives.

"Tālikku arumpeṭutta taṭṭāṉum kaṇ kuruḍō
Cēlaikku nūl eṭutta Cēṇiyaṉum kaṇ kūrūḍō
Pañjāṅgam parkka vanta pārppānum kaṇ kūrūḍō
Eḻutinavaṉ tāṉ kūrūḍō? eḻuttāṉi kūr ilaiyō"[27]

25. *Kuḻandai Ulagam*—K. V. Jagannathan—1967.

26. Kaathal Vaaḻvu—Tamilaṇṇal—1960.

27. *Tamiḻ Nāṭṭu Pāḍalgaḷ*—Mu. Vi. Aravindan—1965.

(Was the goldsmith who made 'thali' blind? Was that weaver who wove the saree blind? Was that Brahmin who fixed the date of marriage blind? Was that God blind? Was his pen not sharp?)

Some laments also reveal the sufferings of widows, the loss of gifts, and the dislike towards sister-in-law.

"Pūtta maram kīlirunta en ponpāttai çollivittā
Pūtta maram ellām pūmāri poyidūmē"[28]

(If I tell my grievance under a flowering tree, even the flowers of the tree will wither off.) This song describes the pathetic condition of a widow.

Another woman has lost her mother-in-law. But she is happy. So she sings as follows:

"Ātaṇḍam kāṭṭai veṭṭi avacaramā pōra atthai
Aṉai muṭi arācaṉukku arici evvaḷavu pōṭaṭṭum"[29]

(O my mother-in-law. You are going urgently on the 'pāḍai' (bier), Please tell me how much rice that I shall cook for my husband?)

Thus, from the folksongs, we can study about the ideas of women, in various situations, briefly.

Women in Tamiḻ proverbs:

The old and new folk sayings are called proverbs. These proverbs reflect the culture, customs and practices of the people in the villages. There are a number of proverbs which reflect the image of the women.

"Peṇ eṉṟāl pēyum iraṅgum". (The devil too will pity a woman). The above proverb reveals that women gain the sympathy of all.

"Peṇ putti piṉ putti". (The women always think last). This proverb states that the understanding power of women is lesser.

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28 & 29. *Tamiḻ Nāṭṭu Pāmarar Pāḍalgaḷ*—N. Vanamāmalai—1960.

"Jān piḷḷaiyāṉālum āṇ piḷḷai". (Even though he is small he is considered as grown up), This proverb tells that the girl baby is not appreciated by the family like the boy-baby in a patriarchal society. The proverb 'Añju peṇ pirantāl arasanum aṇḍi' (if one begets more than five daughters even a king will become a beggur ultimately) stresses the above point.

Proverbs prescribe some rules for of conduct women.

"Pogayilai virittāl pōchu
Peṇpiḷḷai cirithal pōchu"

(A woman loses her modesty if she laughs, just as a tobacco leaf loses its smell when it is unfolded.) Another proverb 'Aḍikkaḍi ciriṭṭavalum vedukkeṇṇu nataṇtavaḷum vēsi' (she who laughs often or walks with bold steps is a harlot). Another proverb says 'Peṇdirkku aḷagu ethir pēsāthu irutthal'. (Not giving repartees is the best ornament of a woman).

Again there are others:

'Māmiyār meççiya marumakaḷ illai' (There is no daughter-in-law to satisfy a mother-in-law). This proverb reports the hostility between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. The proverb, 'Māmiyar uḍaitāl mañkuḍam Marumakal uḍaital poṇkuḍam'. (If the mother-n-law breaks a pot it is only a mud pot but if the daughter-in-law breaks the same pot it is a golden vessel). A mother-in-law gives more importance to a silly mistake committed by the daughter-in-law.

'Mudal maṉaivi dāram, iraṇṭām maṉaivi pāram, mūnram manaivi ghōram', (First wife is a partner, the second a burden and the third a nuisance.) This proverb says that the polygamy is not successful.[30]

Women in Tamiḷ Folk tales :

Folk tales are not seen in written forms. They exist as hearsay. As a hobby and to teach lesson these tales are useful among the villagers.

30. Woman in folk sayings of Tamilnadu—Miss. K. Subramaniya—1969.

A few such stories regarding women are summarised below.

Some women are so ignorant that they are cheated by false priests and beggars.[31]

A young man who was about to marry was collecting sticks saying that he would use the sticks to beat his wife. Hearing this nobody was prepared to give him his daughter. At last a brilliant girl called Mukkammal came forward to marry him and then she made him a slave by her intelligence.[32]

A husband scolded his reckless wife in presence of a guest more than three times. So she got angry and threw the *sambar* pot on his head and broke it.[33]

A cruel wife killed her mother-in-law using a 'ulakkai'. (Pestle), When she was about to die, her son come and asked his mother what happened. The speechless dying mother signed to say that his wife had beaten her severely on her neck. Without understanding the sign, the man enquired his wife and the tricky wife misinterpreted that his mother wanted her jewels to be put on his wife's neck. Thus the women got the jewels by trick.[34]

A miserly mother-in-law fed her daughter-in-law with ragi even though she had sugar cane, rice, chicken roast, egg, vadai etc.[35]

A woman beggar did not forget her begging habit even when she married a king.[36]

A woman posed herself chaste and also made false averments to prove her fidelity.[37]

A barren woman went to a temple to pray for a child. On the way she met another woman carrying a child. When the latter wanted to leave that child with the haven woman for a while the woman refused to receive the child, saying that the child was not clean. Then she was denied of a child.[38]

Thus we can find out the various types of women in folktales. These tales purport to teach lessons to the women indirectly

31 to 38. Tamil Naatu Nadodi Kathaikal—(T.N.N.K.) K. Raja Narayanan K.R.—1966.

Women in Tamil ballads:

We can see various characters of women in Tamil ballads. Some are poor. Some are lovers. Some are princesses. Some are not loyal and sincere.

Nallathaṅgāl was born in a rich family and lived a glorious life. But after death of her husband, she suffered very much in poverty, because she had no right to inherit her husband's property. At last she and her seven children committed suicide falling into a well. It is a tragic end of a woman.[39]

Pommy and Vellaimmāl loved the hero Madurai Veeran. At last they met with cruel death. Pommalakka and Thimmakka loved Muthupattan and married him. But at last they also committed suicide. Princess Ariyamala loved Kāttavarāyan and sacrificed her life for him. Thus the lovers of the ballads had tragic ends, because intercaste marriages were not permitted by the society.[40]

A princess of Kannada loved prince Kulasēkara Pāṇḍian. But he did not love her. When he was compelled to marry her by his father, he ended his life. Hearing the news, the princess died of grief.[41]

Alli Arasāni ruled a kingdom where no man was allowed inside the country. She also won many victories over men. But at last she surrendered to the mighty of Arjuna. Āravalli sisters' story also is yet another in the same vein.[42]

A dhoby woman compelled her daughter-in-law to share her bed with a warrior Perumāl Pāṇḍian.[43]

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39. Nalla Thangaal—Pukalendhi.
40. Muttu Pattan Kathai—N.V.—1971.
41. Ivar Rajakkal Kathai—N.V.—1974.
42. Alli Arasani Maalai—Pukalendhi.
 Aaravalli Suravalli Kathai—Pukalendhi.
43. Mecchum Perumal Pāṇḍian Kathai—S. Shanmugasundaram.

A wife of a Zamindar, had a secret affair with a bodyguard Enamuṭhu Pāṇḍian.[44]

A woman in Vallioor lodged a false complaint that she was raped by Veerathi Veeran.[45]

Women in Folk belifs :

There are many rural beliefs relating to women. Innumerable women in countryside have strong attachment to these folk beliefs. On the basis of such beliefs they are said to lead a calm and peaceful life. I can cite some examples.

After the marriage is over, the bride is advised to enter the home stepping her right leg first.

Newly married women are not allowed to go out or put on flowers during night time. It is believed that the evil spirits may follow them.

When a person is starting on a journey a widow should not cross his path but, a married woman may.

If the girls eat raw rice when they are young, it is believed that on the occasion of their marriage it will rain.

Usually married women do not pronounce their husbands' name. If a situation arises to mention his name she says a word related to the name. For example, if the name is Bālu, she says milk or 'Veḷḷai taṇṇi' or 'Karantatu'.

If any girl dies just before her marriage, the family members hold a ceremony, named 'Kannikku vaital' for the sake of propitiating her spirit. If any woman dies at the time of pregnancy, then the members of her family erect a stone named '*Cumai tāṅki*' in her memory.

44. *Ena muthu Pandian Kathai*—S. Shunmugasundaram.

45. *Ivar Rajakkal Kathai*—N. Vanamāmalai—1974.

Conclusion :

This is not a generalised portrait of the image of woman in Tamil folklore. What we have so far seen in this paper is neither fiction nor imagination. It is a true picture of women folk's life.

Hudson says: "Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. This can be aptly applied to folk literature.[46]

Tamil folklore describes two types of women. On one hand there are ideal wives, faithful lovers, innocent girls, affectionate mothers and hard workers. On the other hand there are cruel mothers-in-law, cunning daughters-in-law envious sisters-in-law, dangerous co-wives and adultresses.

The Chairman in his concluding remarks thanked on behalf of the Institute the audience and the persons who read the papers.

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46. *An introduction to the study of literature*—W. H. Hudson—p. 10—1970,

II

REPORTS OF SEMINARS

A Seminar was conducted under the auspices of the Institute at 4 P.M. on Wednesday the 24th April 1974 in Room No. 48 of the University Departmental Buildings on "PALM LEAF AND CADJAN MANUSCRIPTS".

The following is a report of the Seminar.

Chairman :

Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D.Litt., D.Phil (oxon.), Director, Institute of Traditional Cultures.

Leader :

Thiru R. N. Sampath, M.A., Curator, Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras.

Thirty two persons attended.

The Chairman introduced the Leader and called upon him to speak.

Prof. R. N. SAMPATH, *Professor of Sanskrit, Presidency College, Madras.*

PALM LEAF AND CADJAN MANUSCRIPTS—
Their Preparation and Presentation

The language of any set of people on this earth has always been earlier to that of writing of that language. Nevertheless the question of antiquity of any language and the culture that the speakers of that language reflect, could be understood only on the study of the literature of that language and, that pre-supposes the text and writing of the texts. Until the discovery of the Harappa and Mohanjo Daro excavations, the art of writing in the early days did not seem to go to a very early period in India. Perhaps the

earliest reference to writing as "*lipi*" can be found only in the Pāṇini's *Ashtādhyāyi* (cf. यवनाल्लिप्याम् Yavanāllipyām) as Yavānani etc. In the Vēdic texts one can come across the words like *likh*, *lakhavika* etc. But the written material as a document has not survived to vindicate the substance on which the early writings were made. In the medieval period at least from 4th Century A.D. the kings have issued orders and they have been perpetuated by successfully inscribing them on rocks and copper plates. These go by the name "Inscriptions".

The problem of writing in India was fraught with many obstacles since education was imparted by the teacher to the taught only by spoken words through the medium of ears. Vēdas and the Sāstras were being taught only over "the mouth of the teacher" and not through the medium of any text book. There is a greater esteem for one who has his knowledge in his memory than depending upon the external source as books. The popular saying is that the verses become ornament for the throats of the learned. (*Satam Kānthabhūṣaṇam*) However with the passage of time one can come across the use of the following materials by the Indians for writing.

(a) *Birch-book* : This is the inner bark of the Bhurja tree which grows in the Himālayan slopes above 30,000 feet high. This material is of great antiquity and perhaps this is already noticed by Curtius as a writing material at the time of Alexander's invasion. This material is supposed to last for a very long period without any contamination. The older the material, it is learnt, that more and more red spots develop on the surface and the number of the spots and the colour may decide the age of the material. The oldest documents on this material are the *Dhammapada* in Kharoshto Script unearthed from Khotan and also from Stupas of Afganistan. Next in age are the fragments of Godfrey Collections and Bower Manuscript—the leaves of which are cut to the size of the palm-leaf and arranged on the same pattern of palm leaf manuscript. The birch bark manuscripts that are available in the libraries of Poona, Lahore, Calcutta, London, and other continental places may not be earlier than 15th Century A.D.

(b) *Cotton-Cloth*: Official and private documents were written on the material and the words, *Paṭa*, *Paṭikā* or *Kārpisika-paṭa* are popular ones in the Smṛti literature and in inscriptions of Satavāhana Period.

In Karnātaka, the traders have used this medium with a difference. They used to apply tamarind seed paste mixed with charcoal or lamp black over this material of coarse variety and, chalk or soft stone was used as a pencil to write with. This goes by the name *Kaḍatam* or *Kaḍitam* or Cadjan and it used to be folded many times to form like a small hand book. Burnell and Rice refer to this kind of material as popular among the merchant class.

(c) *Wooden boards or strips of aloe wood and bamboo*: This material is referred to in the *Vinayapiṭaka* and the *Jātakas*. This is common in Burma and Assam.

(d) *Palm-leaves*: This as a medium for writing has been referred to by Husan-Tsang (7th Cent. A.D.). It is quite probable that its use may go back to a much earlier period also.

The palm-leaf manuscripts of India are made from the leaves of *Corypha Umbraculifera* which is indigenous in India. Another variety of the same palm tree is *Borassus Flabellifera* which was perhaps introduced from Africa. However the leaves of both the trees are long and tapering, with central ribs whereas the width of the former is shorter than that of the second one, The preparation of the leaf for writing is an art and it was done with meticulous care. Since ancient times the practice all over Northern, Eastern Central and Western India was to write with ink on the prepared leaf, whereas, in South of Deccan including Kaliṅga (Orissa) the practice was to inscribe with a sharp-pointed iron instrument called "Stylus". Normally the written material was blackened with soot or charcoal, so that the letters may be clear for reading.

(e) Subandhu's *Vāsavadatta* contains a reference to leather as a writing material. Perhaps due to the impurity attached to the substance with particular reference to rituals, the material did not find usage in India whereas, among the Jews and in the regions

of Iran (Persia), this has gained much popularity. The skin of a calf goes by the name *Parchment* whereas that of a sheep by the name *Vellum*. It is only the leather of the younglings that are used and not that of grownup animals.

(f) *Paper* also has been in usage in India and perhaps it may date back not earlier than thirteenth century. The Maharātta rulers have made use of this medium to issue their orders and most of them though in Marāthi language, are in Modi Script.

The general name of instrument of writing is *lekhani* which may be stylus, pencil, brush, reed and wooden pen. The professional writer goes by the name *lipikara* which is familiar in the 4th century B.C. itself. In the 7th and 8th centuries the writer of documents is called *divirapati*. From the 11th century the professional writer is known as Kāyastha though this has formed into a caste name subsequently. The words, *Karnam S'āsanika* and *dharmalēkhik* are familiar in the Tamiḻagam too. From the point of view of calligraphy the manuscripts of India are not significant.

Now details regarding the palm-leaf manuscripts of Tamiḻ Nāḍu are worth noting.

Generally there are two varieties of palm-leaves available in this part of India. One is *Karatala or Nunguppanai* which is 1½″ broad even though long. The other variety is *S'rītāla or Tālippanai* whose leaves are broad of about 2½″ to 3″ and considerably longer than the earlier variety. This kind of palm grows only on the western coast particularly in the Koṅkan regions and in the Kaliṅga or Orissa.

The leaves are removed of their central ribs and cut to size of wieldy nature. These leaves are bound in twine or slender thread with brackets (wooden or brass) on either side to hold them tight. Perhaps the artistic decorations or etching of forms of gods and other designs are to be found on the brackets. It is only very rarely that illustrations are found on the palm-leaves themselves. In North India paintings are seen as illustrations of the contents contained, whereas, in the South and particularly in

Tamiḻ Nādu pictorial etching is very rare and practically nil. In Tañjāvur Saraswathi Mahal Library there is a beautiful figure of Ranganātha of Śrīrangam inscribed by a stylus on a palm-leaf in the bundle of *Divyaprabandham.* Similarly in a Jain manuscript of 13th Century available in the Jain Bhanḍagara at Moodibidri in Karnātaka State, coloured illustrated paintings are noticeable. In the Ceylonese manuscripts the brackets are painted differently and artistically too.

With reference to the scripts used in writing over the leaves, one comes across different scripts only in the writing of Sanskrit language. Tamiḻ, Telugu, Kannaḍa and Malayāḷam are the different languages that are available in this part of the peninsular India besides Sanskrit. Whereas in the regions of Karnaṭaka, Kēraḷa and Āndhra the different native scripts are used in the case of Sanskrit writing also, in Tamiḻ Nāḍu grantha is found used in writing out the Sanskrit work.

Dēvanāgari was unfamiliar to the early writers on palm-leaves. But Nandināgari has appeared to be practised in the Northern parts of erstwhile Mysore because of nearness to Maharashtra where Dēvanāgari is still known as ," Balbodh ". It has crept into the Tulu country and Mādhva Brahmins have used that script in preparing works on philosophy.

The earliest palm-leaf manuscripts that one comes across in South India is that of the Jain collection at Mudibidri. The script is in old Kannaḍa—Halakannaḍa. No palm-leaf bundle available in Tamiḻ Nādu can be earlier than 300 or 350 years in rare instances. The reason is not far to seek. It is the custom of ancients to treat the bundles of manuscripts as Goddess of Learning (saraswathi) in tangible form and any mutilation or breaking of a leaf was considered inauspicious and a replacement of the bnndle was arranged consigning at the same time the old and discardable one either of fire as oblation on a specified day or thrown in the freshes of sacred rivers on particular occasions. Mending and preservation of the old one as of antiquarian value was not attempted and hence older copies became rare.

More often, the scribes never mention the date of the work that they write. In some, one can come across their date of transcription of the work and normally the names of the years being in rotation of 60 do not reveal themselves easily unless there is the mention of Kali era or Saka era.

Preparation of the manuscript:

There are popular ways through which the books are prepared for writing. It must be noticed clearly that just like a person wanting to possess a book of particular nature goes to the shop where it is available for sale and, the availability of the book there presupposes the printing, binding and manufacture of the paper etc., even so in the case of a possession of a manuscript by a learned man or a teacher in the olden days, it must be known that he himself did not write the work on the palm-leaves normally but ordered that to be written by professional scribes who in turn got the requisite palm-leaves that are kept for sale in a seasoned condition.

Experts in the field of palm-tree growing and allied matters, used to cut away the leaves at a stipulated period and spread them exposed during the day and the night. The heat of the sun dried it up and the dew in the night made the colour of the leaf white. After a few days exposure in this manner, the leaves were separated from the mainleaf and the middle rib was removed. The coarse nature of the leaf may continue and length might be cut to any convenient length and size. The letters were inscribed with a sharp-edged iron pen which pierces through the fibrous part, leaving behind marks of scratching. This was the procedure available in the Tamiḻ Nādu as far as preparation of palm-leaf bundles are concerned. These bundles with brackets (wooden) and holes bored through at the two convenient places from both the ends kept the layer of leaves intact when wound round with a string of soft silk or twine.

In North India the preparation of the leaf was very elaborate and cumbersome too. Since writing was resorted to and not incisions, the surface needs to be softened more than its southern

counterpart, so much so the full leaf was soaked in water for a sufficient number of days and then left for drying up exposed not directly in the sun. Later with a smooth and soft stone, the sides of the leaves were polished till all the pores on the sides become levelled up. In some places the leaves were kept underneath a heap of mud and daily water of a required quantity was poured. Then it was removed after a suitable period and the treatment of polishing was undertaken to smoothen the two sides of the leaves.

In these cases the leaf becomes so thin and soft and appears as though they are patches of paper of coarse variety. Mostly the Sinhālese manuscript bundles in Pali language, though inscribed belong to this variety of preparation. The Buddhists who went from Bihar and other regions took with them this art or curing of the palm-leaf too and hence the smooth and soft surface of their manuscript leaves.

The pages are not numbered but leaves are numbered in order and the figure used may conform to the language used in the work They go by the name of folios.

While writing, deletions are noted by dashes on or below the letters, words etc. Corrections are noted by dashes on the letter and the right letter being written below. Additions are normally by the indication of an inclined cross (*Hamsapāda or Kakapāda*) in between the letters where corrections is to be made and the correct form itself written above the line:

These corrections no doubt created more problems when future copies were made and the Editor had to struggle much for the correct lection of the work or to reconstitute the original form.

That the scribes invariably commit mistakes and corrupt the purity of the texts had been clearly indicated by Ānanda Tīrtha in his work "*Māhābhārata Tātparya—Nirṇaya*". In this context one must recollect the need for the condition of understanding the verses as he writes, that was stipulated by Vyāsa to Vighnēśwara, who was his amanuensis in copying the Mahābhārāta,

However normally one can come across the following verses in the end of the works after the Colophons. The gist of the verses is as follows :

"Whatever is found in the book that has been written, relevant or irrelevant the text as seen, I am not responsible. But if out of hurry and out of inadvertence, if dots, letters are not fully described, I may be pardoned for the lapse". Another verse states differently the same condition—either because of mental hurry or slackness in wielding the writing instrument or due to faulty vision or mishearing of the sounds if the work is to contain wrong, then I may be pardoned for the lapses on the part of my hand."

The manuscripts in Tamiḻ language and letters, are found without any mark of punctuation. Dots over the consonant letters are not marked. No doubt the modern reader who is familiar with dots and punctuations in a printed book may find it unreadable or unfamiliar. Perhaps this might be the fear of the old scribes that by stroking dots and dashes, the leaves might be pierced through, or it might be even because of trying to be faithful to the original or transcription—while the original copy might be on the pattern of letters chiselled on the rocks. This might have set up a tradition of writing in Tamiḻ in the long run, whereas in Malayāḷam manuscripts and in Kannaḍa regions the Nandināgari manuscripts contain all kinds of punctuations including that of accent marks for the Vēdic swaras.

There are two references one each in *Thiruviḷayāḍal Purāṇam* and *Tamiḻ Viḍuthūthu.* The later refers as—மஞ்சட் குளிப்பாட்டி மையிட்டு முப்பாலும் மிஞ்சப்புகட்ட மிகவளர்ந்தாய் மஞ்சரையே (கண்ணி-25) and the verse in the former work is,

சேயதாரகை வருணமாந்தீட்டிய வானம்
ஆய வேட்டினை யிருளொனு மஞ்சனந்தடவித்
தூய வாவிலா வென்றுட் வெண்தூசிறுற்றுடைப்பான்
பாயவேலை யின்முளைத்தனன் பனிமதிக் கடவுள்.

The first reference deals with the matters regarding the tender care offered to a child as well as to the manuscript. The babe

is given a bath mixed with turmeric powder (as a germicidal) collyrium is applied to both its eyes for beautification and protection, and given milk. Similarly the manuscript in palm-leaves while being handled is given a coating of turmeric and, charcoal powder dusted over it so that clarity may be obtained.

However, maintenance of manuscripts in Tamiḻ Nāḍu had not received much care in the early days. In Kēraḷa the manuscript bundles were kept hung in the kitchen just below the chimney so that the heat emanating from the over below might not affect, yet the smoke might hover over them. The circulation of wind through the chimney might keep the necessary warmth for the bundles. In Śri Laṅka and in North India special boxes were made for preserving the manuscripts carefully. Buhler has expressed displeasure regarding the maintenance of manuscripts in Tamiḻ Nāḍu. Even then he praised the quick replacement of copies in the place of old ones, which had become fit for discarding. But in the modern days, the preservation has become very easy with sophisticated techniques.

THE METHODS OF PRESERVATION

Once a Library or an individual comes across an "exemplar" a copy is made out so that any subsequent damage done to the original may not be a permanent loss to the scholastic world. In the interest of the preservation of texts, this periodical copying of manuscripts was and is necessary. Rājasēkhara (9th Century) in his *Kāvya Mimāmsa* enjoins upon the poet to make or to have several copies made of his composition in order to ensure the preservation of his writings. However the original called 'exemplar' has its own archaic value and it must also be preserved. Hence attempts must be made out to preserve and conserve the original too in its own nature.

Since the invention of printing, another and best way of preservation of text is to print it. By this process it ensures a comparatively larger sphere for circulation and also a longer duration of stability for the composition. In the recent and modern periods with the advancement of photography, economy of time is

obtained by resorting to microfilming and Xerax copying. However these also have their inherent defects. Since the copies got from the originals contain the same script, one who does not know the script, cannot do anything unless he finds out some one to transliterate the same in the known script. For example a Palm-Leaf manuscript in Sanskrit Language written in Malayāḷam script microfilmed can give only a similar copy and a scholar of Kashmir cannot do anything with it unless it is transliterated in Dēvanāgari character.

The actual preservation of palm-leaf and paper manuscripts against damage is a tough problem indeed. At least paper manuscripts may be mended with chiffon cloth and they may last for a minimum period of 50 years. So far palm-leaf is concerned, it should be preserved in such a way that it does not become brittle. Excessive moisture during rainy season, silver-fish and borer-worms are the most formidable enemies against which the manuscripts are to be protected. Moth or white ant is another scourging enemy to the collections. Periodical dusting is as necessary as the proper ventilation is to the collection. Fumigation with Hydro Paradichloride Benzene is necessary to exterminate any worm building its cocoon in any part of the bundle. The paper manuscript if torn, can be mended providing guards etc. whereas if a leaf-gives way or, dog-ears are developed and corners became cut, how to mend it? The chiffon mending is not at all suitable for that. However in Adyar Library a process practised is as follows:—Broken portions of the leaves are substituted with fresh leaves cut to appropriate size. Then 'quick-fix'—an adhesive cement solution is applied and the damage repaired. Instead of chiffon cloth, tissue paper and Acetate cellulose may be used advantageously for mending paper manuscripts where the ink used may not stand upto the chiffon treatment. One other problem that a paper manuscript presents is the ink in which the manuscript is prepared. The birch bark or cloth are not affected as much as paper. It corrodes the very material on which it is written particularly the Indian Ink. It makes beautiful fret work of designs, on the paper having corroded that part. Under these circumstances copying alone is the remedy. The room where the manuscripts are kept should

be maintained allowing free air to pass through and also in optimum temperature. Too much of dryness in the air will make the leaves and paper brittle and then Earth oil or Lemon-Grass oil or Light diesel oil must be applied and the paper manuscripts allowed to have interspaces for free passage of air in between them. That is, they must not be thickly and densely arranged in the shelves and kept closed. During the winter season, care must be taken to watch the humidity in the atmosphere. The proper recording is 50 to 80%. If it becomes less than 50 for a considerable period, the atmosphere becomes dry and there is a danger of manuscripts becoming brittle. If the recording is more than 80 for a couple of days the manuscripts particularly palm-leaf become moist and that encourage the growth of fungus. So steps must be taken to control effectively the excess of water present in the atmosphere so far as the room is concerned. For that calcium chloride may be used with advantage to absorb the extra water presents in the air.

If the stack-room is not air-conditioned, the possibility of dust settling over the bundles and, the deposit of dust and dirt, becomes a good breeding ground for the fungus and other insects. Hence periodical dusting of individual bundles by spreading the leaves is a must. Vacuum cleaners can be used advantageously for unsettling the dust and dirt over the shelves and rakes and also over the bundles of manuscripts.

Fumigation in a closed and air-proof box (wood preferably) is a dependable method of extricating the chance for the worms like silver-fish etc. to settle and operate upon. The box or closed almirah must contain porous shelves on which the Codexes (bundles) are kept and in the top layer of the shelf sufficient quantity of crystals of Hydro-Parachloride Benzene must be spread. The vapours being heavy will descend down and permeate in the cup-board or the box. If opened for replacement after six weeks, all the bundeles get fumigated.

As an additional precaution, D.D.T. oil may be sprayed not directly over the bundles as it may affect the leaves in the long

run, but in the emptied shelves and it may remove any harmful germs gaining entry into through the bundles.

If properly preserved with periodical application of Lemon-grass oil to keep up its flexibility and manouverability, the palm-leaf will last for at least 6 to 7 hundred years and it is worth its trouble as it has a curio value.

Since manuscripts are necessary for scholars every attempt must be made to preserve them. No sacrifice is too great to preserve the ancient scripts as they form the cultural heritage of this nation—India.

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Thiru M. ARUNACHALAM, Director, Sanskrit, Tamil and other Languages Researeh Institute:—

Thiru Sampath had pointed out the difference between the cadjan manuscripts and the palm leaf manuscripts and also exhibited some cadjan books. He has clearly indicated that there had been no cadjan manuscripts in Tamḻnāḍu. So I shall confine my remarks to palm leaf manuscripts only. These are intended to supplement his remarks on the subject.

We have the printed book today, but the palm leaf manuscript takes us back in time to a period when paper and ink as materials for writing were unknown. Ancient civilizations had utilised different materials for writing their books: parchment, birch bark, wood and cadjan had been in use in different countries at different periods. The palm leaf had been in use in Tamiḻnāḍu from the remote past even to the present day, although paper and printing had begun to take root here even from the beginning of the 18th century.

The Varieties of palms:

Two species of the palm were in use in Tamilnāḍu, the osdinary palmyrah, known as the *panai* (*borassus*), and the talipot palm, known as the *talippanai* (*corypha*). The palmyrah was thicker than the other and stiffer, and yellowish in colour, and retained its clearness for a longer time. The talipot palm was twice as broad and twice as long; thinner and more flexible; but it lost its colour and became black very soon, so that it became increasingly difficult to decipher the matter written thereon.

Preparation of the Blank book:

The palm leaves were gathered in the winter months and allowed to dry in shade. The number of leaves which may be required for a particular book was worked out and the leaves prepared together. The leaves in the tree are joined together in nature into one leaf and several parts together fanned out into a single leaf. These were separated by removing the mid-rib. They were then cut to the same length and breadth, and the corners slightly rounded. The leaves were collected when they were neither too tender nor too mature. Where the leaves were short in length, only one hole was made for passing a string through, to tie up the leaves into a book. This hole was at a distance of one third from the left. The hole was made by passing a red hot steel rod through the leaves, or by a special auger. Where the leaves were long, and the number of leaves also was large, two holes were made. Each hole was at the middle of one half of the length. The string was also passed through the hole at the left. A short piece of bamboo strip like a pencil was passed through the second hole; it had a knob at its top; the string coming out of the hole in the left, was brought to the knob and tied into a knot under it. When the book was bundled up, the bamboo pin was first inserted, the string was drawn tight and tied up. The pin helped to keep the leaves in position without getting bent or disarranged.

There was a wooden board at either end of the bunch of leaves, cut to the size of the leaves, and they served as the 'book covers', similar to the boards at either end of a modern

printed calico bound book. The wood was polished and painted, and also decorated with art work. People who could afford had brass and silver boards at either end, with artistic workmanship. Legendary figures, such as the *Dasāvatāram*, were carved on them. The bamboo pin was also replaced by a silver pin. In the case of books used for *puja*, a silken string was used to tie up the book.

The Stylus:

A steel stylus was used to write on the palm leaf; this made an inscription on the leaf surface, just like the inscription carved on stone. The stylus was always of steel; it was about nine inches in length, having a knife blade at the other end. Often it was foldable just like a pen knife, one end being a blade and the other the sharp stylus. The handle was of wood; where the writer could afford, it was of brass and of silver also, carved with artistic workmanship. The knife portion was useful for training the leaf when necessary.

No ink was used in Tamiḻnāḍu for writing on the palm leaf. But in the palm leaf (talipot) manuscripts of Burma, ink is found used. The leaf surface is polished with a soft stone. Then it is given a golden paint or a silver paint; and on this the matter is written in black ink. Such writing is not found in our country.

Writing with a stylus which made a dent on the surface of the leaf was the general practice in Tamiḻnāḍu. Burmese manuscripts are available which have the writing done in ink (or paint) even in different colours. Such a kind of writing is not seen in Tamiḻnāḍu anywhere. But the existence of such writing cannot be ruled out altogether, because we find a reference to it in the commentary on *Śivadharmottaram* (a work on Śaivism in the first half of the 16th century). Here the author describes the manner which palm leaf is to be written on and the manner in which the ink or paint therefor is to be prepared. "Sometimes the writing is not done by the stylus. Then make an ink in the following manner; Take some gum of the *margosa* tree and soak it in water in a copper pan. Grind *kaḍunelli* (*phyllanthus emblica*),

beleric myrobalan (*terminalia belerica*), boiled arecanut (*kalippākku*) and catechu (*kāsukkaṭṭi*) with the above margosa gum water. Dry this ground paste and then again grind it in the same water with a margosa grinding roller. Again dry it and again grind it in red-cotton-paste water. Make this into a ball. When required for writing, rub it into a paste with water and write with a pen made of the pen-red (*saccharum* arundinacium)". These elaborate instructions do show that writing with a pen (or brush) was also known in the early days.

The purpose of the author here is to indicate how a manuscript of the sacred Śaiva hymns is to be prepared for the purposes of offering worship (*pustaka puja*).

The Writing:

The leaf was held in the left hand, over the three middle fingers, the little finger fixing the leaf in position, and the thumb guiding the stylus; the leaf rested on the three fingers. Just as the typewriter cylinder moves ahead with the impression of each letter, the thumb and all the fingers together move the leaf left, on the completion of a letter; the movement is exactly one space. How was it possible? The stylus was held in the right hand, not as we hold a pen or pencil, but over the right forefinger and under the middle and ring fingers. Writing on palm leaf is not like writing on paper: it is not mere touching; it requires greater pressure to be exerted in order that there may be an inscription on the leaf surface. This pressure was exerted by the two fingers, the middle and the ring, which passed over the stylus and pressed it. The chief guide for the stylus in the writing, particularly in the formation of letters, was the thumb.

Professional scribes and some scholars had fashioned their thumb nail in two ways to guide the stylus. The common way was to grow the thumb nail about 4·5 mms, and make a semi-circular curve at its outer middle. The curve was just sufficient to hold the stylus in position; it was a groove in which the stylus was lodged while writing. The movement of this thumb and the fingers of the right hand fashioned the writing. The other way was to grow the left thumb nail to a length of about 8 mms.,

make a central hole on it in the middle and insert the stylus into the hole. It cannot move out of the hole and was fully under control.

Maintenance of the Book:

To make the writing clear and legible, a paste was smeared over the leaf and then wiped clean; it stayed on the inscribed letters and made them stand out black, in clear relief. The paste consisted of turmeric, *kovai* (bryonia) leaves, charcoal, *vasambu* (acorus root) and linseed oil, ground together into a fine paste. The oil was a preservative for the palm leaf while the acorus was a germ killer. It was a religious duty to take out the manuscripts on the occasion of the annual Saraswati puja, clean them with the oil and then replace them. This process helped to keep the manuscripts free from decay and the action of worms.

The Arrangement of the Book:

It is indeed astonishing that the palm leaf manuscript was planned and prepared exactly like the printed book of today. There were some loose sheets in the beginning and at the end. Then there was a leaf containing only the name of the book and the author, corresponding to the title page. The next sheet contained usually an invocatory verse, a favourite verse of the scribe, not from the text proper. This may be considered to correspond to the modern dedication prefixed to a book. Then there were one or two leaves, which were in the nature of 'contents', giving the chapter number, subject matter and leaf number. Then commences the book, on leaf one. A margin of half an inch is left blank at the extreme right end of the leaf, while an inch and a half are left in the left end. Here the number of the leaf and the chapter heading are written. If the book is a work of commentary, the first words of the verse commented on, are given. At the end of the manuscript, a complete index to the first lines is given (in such important works as Kuṟaḷ, Tiruvāchakam etc.)

Some Difficulties:

No dot or dash was possible in the palm leaf manuscript because these would pierce the leaf or tear it. The writer could

not afford this because he was writing on both the sides of the leaf. Hence there was no dot. The consonants in the Tamil script have a dot over them: this was not marked in the leaf. The reader has to read it only by his experience with the manuscript, and by his familiarity with the literature. Similarly also, in several other letters, the distinguishing marks in some cases was omitted; such as the differences between ா-ர, ெ-ே and so on. These are supplied by the reader while reading. There was no punctuation no full stop: often a symbol like the *alpha* or *W* was placed at the end of a sentence or a verse. In writing verses, the foot arrangement was not indicated by spacing or other sign; there was nothing to distinguish the ending of a line and the beginning of a new line; only the reader has to know it and read accordingly.

A dash will run parallel to the grain in the leaf; so drawing a dash will tear the leaf. Hence no dash was employed; and so when a matter wrongly written had to be scored out, it could not be struck off as we do on paper; it could not be rubbed off, because once written it is there forever. So the scribes employed two devices for scoring off wrong matter. When this consisted of a word or a few letters, they carefully placed a dot on top of the letter; this meant that the letter was struck off. Where the matter scored out was quite long, they placed an ordinary bracket at the beginning and at the end, to denote that the matter within the brackets was scored off.

Special Features:

Two special features may be mentioned. One is conjoint writing. This depends on the idiosyncracy of the writer; he joins two letters and writes them together as one letter. Only those familiar with such writing can read it. Not all manuscript writers used this writing. This form was copied even up to very recent times by writers who used pen and ink also. This writing makes up for speed and conserves space.

The second feature is numerals. The Tamil language had adopted its own numerals for the digits 1 to 9; although the

decimal system for the connotation of numbers in purely of Indian origin, we find the zero not indicated by a symbol here. The numbers 10, 100 and 1000 had separate symbols and when a number say 579 was written, it was written in something like the following manner: 5 (100) 7 (10) 9, where a single symbol was used for each bracketed portion. This was something like the Roman connotation; though many writers used this even late in this century, the introduction of printing by the Europeans dispensed with the cumbersome symbol and the simple place-digit symbol came to be adopted. Separate symbols for ten, hundred and thousand were discarded and they were indicated by one, two and three zeroes after the symbol for number one. But the palm leaf manuscripts do not use the symbol for zero.

Another feature is the symbols for fractions, beginning from three-fourths down to one-three hundred and twentieth part. Each of such fractions had a separate name such as half and quarter, and a separate symbol. For example *mundiri* meant one—three hundred and twentieth part.

Decorations :

Sometimes there are artistic decorations in the manuscripts. The *Tiruvāymoḷi vāchaka mālai,* in the Saraswathi Mahal Library. Tañjāvur, has a rare picture of Sri Ārāvamudan (Sarañgapāṇi swāmi temple) inscribed on the leaf carrying the verse '*Ārāvamudē adiyen udalam ninbāl anbaye*'. Here the reclining pose of Ārāvamudan, the five headed Ādisēsha, Śri Dēvi and Bhudēvi are all beautifully inscribed with the stylus, all within the one inch width of the leaf. This will indicate the meticulous care, religious devotion and supreme artistic sense of the scribes of those days.

In the case of some works like *Kandar anubhuti* and *Varāhimalai*, we find mystic digrams (*chakrams* and *yantrams*) drawn on the margin, to correspond to the verse on the leaf.

Apart from decorating the boards and the illustrations, the manuscript owners had indulged their fancies in shaping the manuscripts themselves. Devotional books like *Tiruvāchakam* were used for daily puja, as the object of puja ; the āgamas lay down

rules for the worship of the Book as '*pustaka puja*'. There was a *bhakta* who had made out his *Tirurvāchakam* manuscript in the shape of a *Śivaliṅga*—complete with the cylindrical top, the *bana*, the round central part the *āvudaiyār*, and the base the *pītha.* He used it as a real *Śivaliṅga* for puja. There have been similar such manuscripts.

The Colophon :

The colophon at the end of a manuscript usually gave the Tamiḻ year, month, date, and day and other particulars about the day of completion of the writing but not the *saka* or other similar year. Sometimes the scribe, if he was a scholar himself, used to write a verse here. Very often such verses gave information on the author, his patron and his date. Sometimes the scribe spoke about himself. Here is one such colophon, found at the end of a *Periyapurāṇa* manuscript. 'This manuscript was completed on 29th Tuesday *Mārgaḻi. Virodhikritu* for Śivarāmaliṅgam Chettiyār son of Muthiah Chettiyār, by the writing of this mad fellow (*pēyan*) named Āpaduddharanan, son of Kuttālam Sattanātha Chettiyār. May the elders, *mahatmas* and scholars who may happen to read this *Periyapurāṇam* at a future date bless me that I may have good sense and that I may for ever be engaged in copying the books of the Śaiva canon.' Incidentally I may mention that this manuscript has been written in such a minute character that today, we cannot read it without a magnifying glass. The scribe's vision was of course so clear that he had no glass and he wrote this as a normal piece of work. He has written 30 lines to a page, two inches wide. The whole of *Periyapurāṇam* of 4286 quatrains is contained in 210 leaves, 3″ long and 2″ wide. This manuscript is a wonder for all times. Bulk for bulk, this manuscript occupies only a fourth of the total volume occupied by a closely printed book.

Pocket Editions :

It may surprise us to learn that there were also pocket editions of the manuscript. These were an inch broad and about three inches long; the leaves were as many as the subject required; there were no binding boards at the end. Since the

leaves were short in length, there was only one hole through which passed a thin silken binding string. The owner wrote out the text he wished to study often and memorize and kept it in his lap. (There was no shirt and no pocket in those days.) Where he was a monk in a monastery, he had it tucked up in his matted locks, to be taken out for study whenever he had some leisure and re-inserted.

The Scribe:

Many scholars wrote their copies of books themselves. This can be clearly seen both from the writing and its correctness. But generally, paid scribes were employed for making out copies. Palm leaf manuscripts, it is said, can exist for 800 years: it is doubtful; we may put the limit safely as 500 years. Yet, except in rarely preserved cases, we do not have manuscripts of over 300-400 years. There are with me two manuscripts which can be considered 400 and 350 years old; but at the slightest touch they tend to crumble into powder; the leaves do not break; they become powder. It is doubtful if they can be treated now and preserved at all.

But the work of copying and preserving has been going on. For example, if we take *Kuṟaḷ*, the manuscripts actually written by its author could not exist now. Copies were made in his day and later; when these began to crumble, copies were again made and so on till the last century, when the first Kuṟaḷ was printed probably in 1812. At the lowest estimate, the manuscript used for this printing could have been about the sixth copying in the line of duplication.

When there was a scholar who had a number of pupils under him, each of them made out a copy of the original text for himself and thus the book multiplied. But in the case of many unfamilar works, it was the scribe who helped to preserve the book from extinction. Naturally a scholar of the past would like to preserve all his manuscripts. But when he died, his offsprings might not be good scholars and might not know the value of the manuscripts. In such cases however, his children always preserved the manuscripts out of a reverence to the ancestor and never allowed

a manuscript, to perish. When a manuscript reached the state when it could no longer to preserved, they employed paid scribes, just as we employ typists, to copy out the originals before consigning the original unusable manuscript to the river or the sea. It was then a matter of pride for well to do persons to own a large number of books; for this purpose they always employed a scribe, who was on their monthly pay rolls. His duty was to copy dying manuscripts and to acquire fresh manuscripts and copy them out. In this manner, the race of scribes was perpetuated, as well as the books themselves. It was this race which later on came to be called *kaṇakkar*; it did not mean accountant, but meant only copyist. Because of their long association with this work, they wrote well without mistakes and also wrote a neat and settled hand.

Now a word may be said about the preservers of the manuscripts in general. The Vaishnava exegetical writing was the exclusive preserve of the Vaishnava community; all the exegetical writing was in Sanskrit and Maṇipravāḷa. It was preserved by the Vaishnava Brahmins known as the Aiyaṅgārs. But the general literary works, poetry, grammar, epics, classical writing and devotional poems including the Vaishnava canon—were preserved only by the Vellala community through, the length and breadth of the land. Though there were Brahmin writers of Tamiḻ poetry, the whole community swore by Sanskrit and, Tamiḻ books were given by them only a second class status. The lower classes did not have much of education or culture, because all their time was spent only in eking out a living. It was only the middle class, the landed Vellalas, who had the time and the leisure, the culture and the education, and the economically free condition necessary for study, for spending on books and for feeding the scribes. But for this class, even the classics that we have today would have passed into oblivion a long time ago.

A Work of Art:

Compared with the printed book, we can easily perceive that any manuscript is a work of art. The tying up of the leaves was itself an artistic performance. The writing required the greatest

dexterity. We have been in the printed world too much to understand the labour, the skill and even the loving care that went into the making of a manuscript.

The finished book is a marvel for all time. The letters were all the same size; no letter was out of shape or out of position. A uniform space of about half a mm. was maintained between one letter and the next. The lines were all straight and uniformly spaced. The beauty and finish of a hand-written page will far outshine any page of print, however beautifully done. This was an art prevalent in the whole of Tamiḻnāḍu. An instance of this writing art has been described earlier, when mentioning a Periya-purāṇa manuscript under the head 'colophon'. This art has completely disappeared now. Other vanishing arts have been recaptured and restored; but this is one which has wholly disappeared, never more to return.

An Admission test:

Just as there is a test for admission to any course of studies in modern days, there was also a kind of aptitude test for the entrant. Pupils then boarded with the master for the duration of the studies. One the morning of the day of admission, the master made the young boy observe his handling of his books. Many manuscript book would be opened for study and reference, and then bundled up. At the end of the session, the master would ask the entrant to collect together and bundle up two or three books. The care with which he was able to gather the books and the neatness with which he tied up each bundle of leaves would be observed by the master, who would immediately decide whether the boy deserved the admission by the interest shown in his careful handling of the manuscript or whether he was not to be admitted.

The Chairman thanked the leader and the speaker for their illuminating and interesting speeches.

BOOK REVIEWS

Indian Philosophical Quarterly:

Jointly published by the Pratap Centre of Philosophy, Amalner and the Department of Philosophy of the Poona University, is a valuable forum for articles in all areas of philosophy including History of philosophy and Indian philosophy. *Volume I, No. 2,* contains six articles and a book review, covering such diverse fields as phenomenology or religion, Marxist thought, hedonism, music, Dr. Ambedkar and Buddhism, and mind-body relation.

Emphasizing the need for the phenomenological approach to religion, Dhirendra Sharma points out in his article on "Phenomenology of Religion and Sri Aurobindo" that "India and the world can derive better insight and deeper knowledge of religions and social phenomena by analysing the personal life history and works of the late Shri Aurobindo Ghosh in the frame of reference of the scientific methodology as appolied to psychology and anthropology of our times." (pp. 94-95). W. S. Barlingay in his article on "Dr. Ambedkar and conversion to Buddhism" gives the reasons for Ambedkar giving up Hinduism and becoming a Buddhist. Ambedkar, says Barlingay, gave up Hinduism because (i) he found Hinduism to be dogmatic (ii) *varna-dharma* of Hinduism was completely opposed to the democratic principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, and (iii) Hinduism in practice is an obstacle to healthy social developments and political democracy. It is necessary to bear in mind that there is no religion without dogmas. Nor is there any religion without philosophical presuppositions. "The discoveries and truth of modern science" have nothing to do with the core of religion. Barlingay's observation, "It is emphatically not true—as Dr. Ambedkar points out—that all religions meaning thereby dogmatic religions, are true" (p. 151) can be questioned.

Volume I, No. 3 of Indian Philosophical Quarterly contains, besides a book-review, four articles—on "Self-consciousness" by

Ramachandra Gandhi, on "Will, Will, and Must" by A. R. Kelkar, on "Scientific Method in Galileo and Bacon" by W. Mays, and on "The concept of 'Existence' and Absolute Skepticism", by Bhaswati Bhattacharya.

Gandhi's article on "Self-consciousness" is interesting and valuable. He holds the view that self-consiciousness is a necessary condition of thinking. Examining the contribution made by Galileo and Bacon to scientific method, Mays brings out the difference between them, though both of them stressed the importance of observation and experiment. The case of the absolute nihilist is presented and examined in great detail with special reference to Vatsyāyana, Uddyotakara, and Vāçaspati by Bhaṭtacharya in her article.

Volume I, No. 4, of *Indian Philosophical Annual* contains six articles and a book review. As in the case of previous issues of the journal, this issue also focusses attention on a variety of problems, which engage the attention of philosophy, Western and Indian.

Rajendra Prasad discusses the nature of morally evaluatable action in his article on "Intèntion and Action". Drawing a distinction between a duty explanation and an intention explanation, he says that a duty explanation both justifies and explains an action which a person does, whereas an intention explanation only explains it. In the context of some recent criticisms of Austin's critique of Moore, D. Y. Deshpande examines the concept of voluntary action as well as the concept of cause, and concludes that the *agent* who knows, feels, wills and acts, and who is held responsible for his actions cannot and should not be kept out of our accounts of the causation of action. The article "What is Śruti" by R. K. Tripathi is a sequel to his earlier paper, "Can Śruti be false?" The author stresses that (1) *śruti* is impersonal (*apauruṣēya*), (2) it presupposes the attitude of bearing, (3) it is informative of the existant, (4) it is concerned with the trans-empirical and (5) it suggests the way to realise the trans-empirical reality. Taking a very broad view of *śruti*, Tripathi argues that

any text, the Bible or the Quoran or any other text which reveal the transcendent can be called *śruti.* Since the transcendent reality çan have any number of manifestations—and Iśvara who reveals *śruti* is a manifestation of Brahman—, it follows, argues, Tripathi, that the truth can berevealed by *different persons* from time to time. It is necessary, according to him, to avoid the Mimāmsa idolatory of the word and the Christian idolatory of the person. Tripathi's article is thought-provoking, and indicates the perspective through which one has to consider the Vēdānta interpretation of *śruti.* Is it necessary to accept coherence as the nature of truth as well as the criterian of truth? John Howie argues in his article on "The Nature and Criterion of Truth" that one can accept coherence as the criterion of truth without however admitting coherence as the nature of truth. He maintains that Blanshard's insistance that coherence is both the criterion and nature of truth is unwarranted. That relativism cannot be the final position and that anti-relativism, conceived in a spirit of freedom and generosity, will help us to achieve progress, are the views held by J. de. Marneffe in his article on "Cultural Relativism". N. Mall discusses some of the basic issues and logical difficulties involved in the different theories of meaning in his article on "The concept of Meaning".

Each issue of the *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* edited by Professor S. S. Barlingay of the University of Poona contains valuable research articles contributed by scholars of Indian and Western Universities. This journal will be useful to all students and teachers of Philosophy.

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Indian Philosophical Quarterly is being published by Pratap Centre of Philosophy, Amalner, and Department of Philosophy, University of Poona. In the issue now before us (*Vol. II, No. 4,* July 1975) we have a number of contributions from eminent philosophers.

Prof. Richard De Smet of De Nobili College, Poona, in his article on the Aristotelian-Thomist Conception of Man discusses the method devised by Aristotle for investigating the psyche-phenomenon and of some important features of his conception of man as completed by S. Thomas.

Meena Alexander's article on 'Inner Time and a Phenomenology of Existence' contains a brilliant analysis of Husserh's theory of consciousness and the relevance of Inner Time to a phenomenology of Existence.

Ved Prakash Varma in his article entitled: "Monotheism and the Problem of Evil" sets forth arguments in favour of the view that the presence of evil in the world is irreconcilable with the monotheistic conception of God and therefore it may be regarded as a conclusive evidence against this theory.

In his article 'The Arts, Criticism in India, and Aesthetics', S. K. Saxena draws our attention to contemporary Indian painting, our rhythm, music and dance and also to specimens of our 'critical writing' today.

The article on 'Violence' by Rama Shanker Misra is devoted to an empirical enquiry into the causes or the consequences of violence.

Ram Lal Singh examines in detail the problem of synthetic *apriori* knowledge in Kant in his article 'Kant's Theory of the Synthetic *Apriori*'.

In his very illuminating article 'The Nature and Value of Philosophy', Abdul Martin observes 'Philosophy is essentially an activity of arguing—thinking, meditating analysing and weighing evidence—about whatever problem it may find in its way'.

H. P. Pardikar in his essay on Use of 'Hypocyclic Curves in Art' concludes after a detailed discussion that 'hypocyclic curves provide us a very big domain for the formation of Art forms'.

The issue also carries review of two important philosophical works, viz. *Upanisads and Yoga, an empirical approach to the Understanding* by T. R. Kulkarni, and *The Negative Dialectics: A Study of the Negative Dialecticism in Indian Philosophy* by Sharma, Dhirendra.

It will thus be seen that this issue carries a large number of contributions which cover a wide field.

Dr. N. VEEZHINATHAN, M.A., Ph.D.

A Discography of the Art Music of India by Elise B. Barnett., Published by The Society for Ethomusicology, Special Series No. 3, U.S.A., 1975, 54+VIpp., $ 4.00.

This book gives a catalogue of phono-recorded music of India, recorded and released by the companies in the United States of America, upto Jan. 1, 1973. The author of this book is a Professor of Music at the City college of the city of New York and a member of the Board of Directors of the Asian Society. She has spent eleven years in India where she worked for the All India Radio. The Book contains two sections, Discography and Indices apart from the Introduction. In the Introduction, the author gives very clearly, how she has arranged the phono-records in the Discography and Indices Sections.

In the Discography part, the name and address of the record company, Catalogue number of the Disc, the title, the name of the performers, performing media, the director, the content, any additional information given in the Disc, the reviewer and reference for the review are clearly given. The identification number of the GCI (Gramaphone Company of India) which is given in parenthesis if it has been issued in India, is very useful for the Indians. The reference to the review for the Disc, is also very helpful as it enables one to have an idea of the phono-record before he purchases it.

As the author points out "The Indices serve as guides to various musical forms, compilers, performers and other data contained in the Discographies listing" (p. V). The Indices consist

of the following Catalogue Titles:—Sacred Chants, Art Music, (Hindusthani) Rag, (Hindusthani) Tal, (Hindusthani) Performers, (Hindusthani) Art Music, (Karnatak) Ragam (Karnatak), Talam (Karnatak), Performers (Karnatak), Performance Media (Aerophones, Chordophones, Idiophones, Membranophones, Voice), Dance and Dance—derived Art Music, Folk Music, Collections, Compilers and Recording Directors, Composers, Hindusthani and Karnatak and, finally Oral descriptions.

This kind of book has not been so far published in India. It will certainly be an incentive for the research students and lovers of music in India to attempt on writing such books, for reference and guidance.

Unfortunately, there are a few printing mistakes in this book which could have been avoided. These mistakes will mislead a non-Indian to spell the name of the Rāga, the name of the Performer or the Title of the Composition. *Examples* of such are given below.

Name of the *Rāga* mis-spelt Page No. 3
Item No. 19. BM30L2007

As given in the Book	Nāta Bhairavi
Correct version	Nata Bhairavi

Name of the *Performer* mis-spelt Page No. 19
Item No. 138 MOAE140 (GCI. EALP1299)

As given in the book	V. G. Jo*b*—Violin
Correct version	V. G. Jo*g*—Violin

The *Title* of the Composition mis-spelt Page No. 3
Item No. 17. KBLY86122

As given in the Book	'Mana*val*akim*p*aradate'
Correct version	'Mana*vyal*akim*c*haradaṭe'

Apart from these minor printing mistakes, this book is excellent in presentation and approach. The book is very interesting and useful for both music students and lovers of music.

Selvi S. A. DURGA, M.A., M.Litt.

Experiences of a Pilgrim Soul by Kaviyogi Maharshi Shuddananda Bharati, Second Enlarged edition 1973, published by the Shuddhananda Library, Yoga Samaj, Madras, 20—pp. 519, price Rs. 8/-.

The title cover of this book says that it is "a faithful record of a long Yogic Life and its contact with great souls of the age. A laudable treasure of Self-experiments, poetic dreams, Spiritual attainments and picturesque 'accounts of global tours of the Pilgrim Soul'.

The Pilgrim Soul mentioned (obviously the author himself) whose name is first given out as Satyartha by an elder brother of his grandfather and his first Guru Purnananda. The book is replete with biographical sketches of saints, savants, poets, social workers, and politicians whom the author met or, whose actions and thoughts influenced him, like Sadasiva Brahman, Thayumanavar, Saint Thyagaraja. Madame Blavatsky, Annie Beasant, J. Krishnamurthy, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Rama Tirtha, Sringeri Sankaracharya, Sadhu Sunder Singh, Rabindranath Tagore, Ram Mohan Ray, Dayananda, Swami Sivananda, Saint Ramalingaswami, Ramana Rishi, Aurobindo, Holy Mother, Manickavasagar, Sai Baba apart from his own Gurus Purnananda, Gnana Siddha, Pandit Deivasikhamani, Tukaram, Ranade, Aum Ram etc. He also writes of his political initiation from three patriots viz. V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, Poet Subramania Bharathi and Justice Mani Aiyar.

The book also contains accounts of his global tour, and summaries of his speeches at various places as also of his work "Bharata Shakti Mahakavyam" and his reflections on Nehru and on other political happenings.

The book which is highly informative is written in simple and lucid style. But any one who seeks full and detailed methods for spiritual salvation actually practised by the 'Pilgrim Soul' and a description of the 'Pilgrim Soul's spiritual attainments, referred to on the title cover is likely to be disappointed. A few printing mistakes occur but these do not detract the immense value of this compendium offered at such a low price.

The book will be a very valuable possession for anybody who is desirous to know the life history not only of this great contemporary 'Pilgrim Soul', but also of all spiritual, social and political leaders of India.

S. B. SUNDARAM.